Famine Politics in Maoist China + the Soviet Union

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Felix Wemheuer

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FAMINE POLITICS IN MAOIST CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION

FELIX WEMHEUER

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For Xiaoqing and Meylin

Tsze-kung asked about government. The Master said, "The requisites of government are *that there be sufficiency of food, sufficiency of military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler.*"
Tsze-kung said, "If it cannot be helped, and one of these must be dispensed with, which of the three should be foregone first?" "The military equipment," said the Master.
Tsze-kung again *asked, "If it cannot be helped, and one of the remaining two must be dispensed with, which of them should be foregone?" The Master answered, "Part with the food. From of old, death has been the lot of all men; but if the people have no faith* in their rulers, *there is no standing* for the State."
—Confucius

Contents

Acknowledgments ix
List of Abbreviations and Measurements xi

Introduction 1

PART 1: COMPARING THE GREAT LEAP FAMINES UNDER STALIN AND MAO
1. The "Tribute" of the Peasantry in Times of Food Availability Decline 25
2. Protecting the Cities, Fighting for Survival of the Regime 62

PART 2: THE POLITICIZATION OF HUNGER IN MAOIST CHINA
3. Hierarchies of Hunger and Peasant-State Relations (1949–1958) 77
4. Preventing Urban Famine by Starving the Countryside (1959–1962) 115

PART 3: FAMINES ON THE PERIPHERY
5. The Burden of Empire: The Crisis of "Indigenization" in Ukraine and Tibet 157
6. "Eating Mice for the Liberation of Tibet": Hunger in Official Chinese History 175

7. "Genocide against the Nation": The Counter-Narratives of Tibetan and Ukrainian Nationalism 191

EPILOGUE AND CONCLUSION

Epilogue: Lessons Learned—How the Soviet Union and China Escaped Famine 221

Conclusion: Hunger and Socialism 240

Notes 261

Index 317

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Abbreviations and Measurements

Abbreviations

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GMD	Guomindang (Nationalist Party)
NBCK	*Neibu Cankao* (Internal References)
NEP	New Economic Policy
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
RMRB	*Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily)
TAR	Tibet Autonomous Region

Measurements

1 *jin* = 500 grams
1 *mu* = 1/15 hectare
1 ton = 1,000 kg (metric ton)

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FAMINE POLITICS IN MAOIST CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION

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Introduction

DURING THE TWENTIETH CENTURY more people died of famine than in any other century in human history.[1] When we hear the word "famine," pictures of starving African babies may come to mind. However, it would be more consistent with the historical facts if we were to think of starving peasants from the Soviet Union and China as well, for as Stephen Devereux estimates, 80 percent of the 70.1–80.4 million victims of famine in the twentieth century died in these two countries.[2] This figure does not include the victims of daily malnutrition and hunger on a global level but only the victims of famines that are defined by high excess mortality rates compared to the average development of population in "normal" years. Under the new revolutionary regimes, numerous terrible famines occurred that resulted in higher mortality rates than from catastrophes in prerevolutionary times: the urban famine during and after the Russian Civil War of 1919–1921 and the rural famine in 1921–1922; the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 in the aftermath of collectivization; the famine after the German invasion of 1941, when the Nazis used hunger as a part of their genocidal policies; the famine that broke out in 1947 in the postwar Soviet Union; and the Chinese Great Leap Forward (1958–1961), which resulted in the deaths of millions. It seems obvious that the Great Leap famine was not an isolated accident in Chinese history but has to be placed within the

larger history of Socialist revolutions in agrarian empires. In this book, I will mainly compare the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 with the Great Leap famine because of their similarities.

Famines under socialism were quite different from epidemic hunger in Africa today. The times of mass starvation were relatively short, but the famines were characterized by high excess mortality and lowered birthrates.[3] In the beginning of the twenty-first century, most people in the so-called "Third World" do not die in terrible famines with high excess mortality rates but rather perish due to their "normal" conditions of living, such as epidemic hunger or disease. According to the United Nations, 923 million people were reported undernourished in 2007.[4] Every year around 36 million people die from hunger directly or indirectly.[5] Many are women and children in developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. In the past twenty years, famines with significant excess mortality rates took place in Africa only in the context of civil wars such as those in Somalia and Sudan.[6]

In our imagination, hunger and famine are often associated with backward societies in which agricultural production is unprotected against the vagaries of nature and crops are destroyed by floods, drought, and vermin. A Chinese peasant saying "Rely on heaven to eat" *(kaotian chifan)* sums up this reality. In fact, deadly famines also occurred in ancient times, but the death toll from famines increased rapidly between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries.[7] William Dando estimates that at least 2 million people died of famine in the seventeenth century, 10 million in the eighteenth, and 25 million in the nineteenth.[8] These figures are probably grossly understated. Devereux's estimate of 70.1–80.4 million deaths for the twentieth century shows that deadly famines must also be considered products of modernity and not just calamities of a premodern past. Moreover, Devereux's list of famines in the twentieth century does not include the several million Soviet citizens who perished as a result of the genocidal policies of Nazi Germany during World War II.[9] He also estimates the number of victims in Republican China (1911–1949) at a relatively low 13.5–16.5 million.

Major economic and political systems under which deadly famines occurred in the modern age include colonialism; nationalist regimes in the Republic of China; socialism in agrarian countries; German National Socialism; and postcolonial regimes in Africa, where famine is often related to war or civil war. British colonialism was guided by

laissez-faire liberalism and interpretations of Malthusian theory.[10] The late-eighteenth-century British scholar Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834) believed that an increase in production would be too slow to feed a quickly growing population or, to use his term, "overpopulation." To save the poor from starvation would only exacerbate the problem. Under the rule of Queen Victoria (1837–1901), between 1.1 and 1.5 million people perished in the Irish famine of 1846–1850,[11] and between 12 and 29 million Indians were killed by famine between 1879 and 1902.[12] During World War II, the Nazis used hunger as a weapon in the occupied areas of Eastern Europe when they carried out their ruthless policies of genocide to secure the food supply for the home front and the army. The Nazi leadership had fresh memories of British blockades and food shortages, which caused rebellions in the navy and among workers against the imperial government and a revolution in 1918 during the previous world war.[13] In order to secure the food supply for Germany, the government was willing to starve to death millions of "useless eaters" in the occupied areas of Eastern Europe and in prisoner of war (POW) camps.[14] When the Allied forces liberated the concentration camps in 1945, the surviving inmates were near death from starvation, resembling living skeletons. German terror had produced these creatures of starvation in the middle of the European heartland in the twentieth century. Giorgio Agamben argues that the "Muselmann," a famished creature who resembled a living ghost hovering between life and death, was one of the major products of the camps.[15] Under German occupation severe famines also took place in 1944 in the Netherlands and Greece.[16]

DEFINITION OF FAMINE AND HUNGER

Before turning to the Soviet and Chinese cases, I would like to define famine und hunger. The definition of famine has long been debated by scholars, and the greatest challenge is to distinguish between famine and the kind of everyday malnutrition that can also result in the deaths of millions.[17] When a government declares a famine, it typically has to organize relief programs. Everyday malnutrition, however, can more easily be ignored. Amartya Sen has argued that no deadly famine has taken place in India since its independence in 1947. However, the normal annual excess mortality figure for India is more than 3.9 million

higher than that for China, as we see by applying the different death rates of the two countries.[18] "This implies that every eight years or so more people die in India because of its higher regular death rate than died in China in the horrendous famine of 1958–61," as was estimated by Jean Drèze and Sen in 1989 based on the figure of 29.5 million deaths in the Great Leap famine. "India seems to manage to fill its cupboard with more skeletons every eight years than China put there in its years of shame."[19]

Some economists claim that the indicator of food prices could also be useful in arriving at a definition of famine. In the Socialist cases, the central factors affecting likelihood of survival were not market prices for food or the rural credit system, as was the case in the Bengal famine of 1943. Under a planned economy, rationing and a unified system of the sale and purchase of grain played a key role. As a result of the state monopoly of food distribution, stealing became a necessity for many peasants to survive. The economist/demographer Cormac Ó Gráda gives a definition of famine that also includes the breakdown of a society's normal life: "Classic famine means something more than endemic hunger. Common symptoms absent in normal times include rising prices, food riots, an increase in crimes against property, a significant number of actual or imminent deaths from starvation, a rise in temporary migration, and frequently the fear and emergence of famine-induced infectious diseases."[20] Below we will see whether or not such phenomena occurred during the famines under Socialist rule. Alexander De Waal points out that an affected population's definition of famine often differs from that of experts or government institutions. Throughout Africa, the words for "famine" and "hunger" are typically the same.[21] The same holds true in the Russian language *(golod)*. It is only within the last twenty years that a new word was invented, in the discourse of the Ukrainian diaspora, to describe the Ukrainian famine of 1931–1933 (Holodomor in Ukrainian and Golodomor in Russian). The Chinese language distinguishes more clearly between hunger *(ji'e)* and famine *(jihuang)*. A natural disaster *(tianzai* or *zainan)* might cause a harvest failure *(huang* or *zaihuang)*, but a failure of the harvest does not necessarily lead to famine or hunger.[22] However, in practice it is always a matter of interpretation. With reference to the African cases, De Waal argues that peasants often make no clear distinction between famine and daily malnutrition.

In the context of socialism, it is relatively easy to distinguish famine from daily malnutrition in most cases. The most severe instances, such as the Soviet famines of 1919–1921, 1931–1933, and 1947 and the Chinese famine of 1959–1961, rapidly resulted in high excess mortality, and overwhelming excess mortality is a useful marker for famine under socialism. From population statistics we have clear information about the beginning, the peak, and the end of each famine, even if the overall death tolls are still controversial. Periods of hunger and malnutrition are much harder to define than famine because what people call "hunger" is influenced by cultural and subjective factors. Nowadays, most historians and anthropologists take for granted that what people consider "food" and how much of it they require to survive are culturally dependent and vary among societies. In his short essay on needs, Theodor Adorno reminds us that food is a political and social issue.[23] However, international organizations find themselves in the position of defining absolute standards for the whole world. According to the definition of the UN World Food Program (WFP), the minimum energy requirement per person per day is 2,100 calories.[24] "Minimum energy requirement" means that one can perform light manual labor without losing weight or becoming ill. This standard is quite low compared to that of 3,400 calories and 50 grams of protein per person per day, set as a minimum by the British Medical Association in the 1930s, when many people performed heavy industrial labor.[25] Nutrition scientists of the early twentieth century imagined the human being as a machine that needed the right calorie intake as a motor needed fuel. However, what people consider sufficient food also depends on climate conditions, the seasons, and the type of labor performed. People living in chilly apartments or outdoors in winter and also performing hard labor require much more energy than do white-collar workers sitting in warm offices. Historic and cultural habits play an important role as well. The imperial government in Russia defined 295 kg of grain per year per capita (around 808 grams a day) as the average consumption for peasants under normal conditions. That amount translated to almost 2,500 calories a day. In the late nineteenth century, the Russian Central Statistics Committee adopted 220 kg of grain (about 1,700 calories per day and 602 grams) as the minimum intake to prevent serious biological deterioration in famine years. However, during the famine of 1891, the Ministry of Internal Affairs opted for 150 kg per year

(around 410 grams per day) as a minimum "starvation norm" for bare survival for a very poor peasant family.[26]

Specialists in nutritional history have argued in debate with experts of Soviet history that the caloric intake of the urban working families during the famine in Russia in 1919—ranging from 1,550 to 2,050 calories per person per day—was not markedly below that commonly experienced in British working-class diets during the nineteenth century.[27] However, Stephen Wheatcroft argues that the absolute level of energy intake should not be the only criterion used to identify hunger and that the fall from the "normal" rate must be considered too. That decrease was around 55 percent for the Soviet rural population during the famine at that time.[28]

Unlike the rationing systems in Germany during World War II and in the Soviet Union, the Chinese government used *jin* (a unit equivalent to 500 grams), not calories, as the basis for its rationing system.[29] As a result, an urban resident might receive (for example) a ration of 700 grams of processed grain but would not be sure about its quality, as the nutritional value of fresh high-quality rice and old grain is quite different. It has been assumed that in the 1950s, 90–95 percent of calories were provided from grain.[30] State leaders such as Chen Yun recommended 500 grams of processed grain as a reasonable minimum daily ration for peasants in "normal times."[31] Such an amount provides only about 1,700 calories from wheat flour and 1,830 calories from milled rice.[32] This amount was around the same as that recommended by the Statistical Committee of the tsarist state as the minimum level for surviving a famine. Several Western scholars have tried to estimate the calorie intake of the Chinese population based on official statistics. Kenneth Walker found that in the mid-1950s peasants in many regions in the northern or western provinces consumed marginal (1,800–1,900) or even poor (under 1,800) levels of calories per day; only people in Manchuria had a high calorie intake (2,500).[33] Even before the onset of the famine many Chinese peasants lived on a calorie intake lower than the minimum defined by international organizations today and ate less than Russian workers during the famine of the Civil War. The last year before the Great Leap Forward, 1957, shows a very close fit between the average demand and supply on the national average. Vaclav Smil has argued that the per capita supply averaged between 2,100 and 2,200 nutritional kilocalories (kcal) per day, while the rural popu-

lation engaged in moderate-to-heavy unmechanized farm work would need about 2,100 kcal per day. As a result, only a "highly equitable distribution of food could have prevented massive malnutrition."[34] During the Great Leap famine, the per capita daily nutrients availability fell from 2,071.9 kcal per day in 1958 to 1,736.81 kcal in 1959 and 1,462.32 kcal in 1960.[35] One problem is that no statistical breakdowns are available for age, sex, weight, and physical activity.[36]

We should keep these social and cultural differences in mind when we compare statistics of nutrition. A worker in heavy industry in Manchuria might have defined and felt hunger very differently than a peasant in a poor northern province did. The definition of famine itself also varies in different cultures. The most useful marker to distinguish between everyday, commonplace malnutrition and famine is excess mortality in the population statistics.

FAMINE IN THE SOVIET UNION AND MAOIST CHINA: AN OVERVIEW

In both the Soviet Union and Maoist China, socialism was regarded as a program for escaping chronic poverty and famine. Industrialization and modernization would be a hard and painful process, but in the end the shortcomings of the old society would be overcome, according to the promises of the parties; things would be different.

During the civil war between the Bolsheviks and the counterrevolutionary "White" forces, Russia experienced an urban famine, with death rates rising in the cities between 1918 and 1920 and millions leaving the cities in the hope of surviving in the countryside.[37] For most of the war, the major grain surplus regions such as Ukraine, Siberia, and the northern Caucasus were controlled by anti-Communist forces. All parties enforced heavy taxation on the peasants in order to feed their armies. Furthermore, the Bolsheviks' attempts to mobilize the rural poor against the kulaks and to enforce a state monopoly of the grain trade proved counterproductive and inefficient.[38] Finally, an urban crisis resulted at the end of "war communism." In March 1921, formerly loyal revolutionary troops turned against the Bolshevik party in Kronstadt. After this uprising, the Bolsheviks found it necessary to introduce the New Economic Policy (NEP), legalizing black markets and replacing requisitions with a grain tax. Despite all efforts

to improve the situation in the countryside, heavy droughts and a bad harvest caused a rural famine in the south of Russia and Ukraine in 1921–1922, with deaths estimated as between 5 and 14 million.[39] The Soviet government publicly acknowledged the famine and allowed foreign relief agencies to operate in Russia, thanks to which over 12 million people could be nourished.[40] The first famine under Socialist rule has to be seen in this context of the economic breakdown of Russian society between the outbreak of World War I and the end of the Civil War. Between 1914 and 1921, agricultural output decreased by 57 percent and industrial output by as much as 85 percent. The number of cattle fell between 1916 and 1922 by 33 percent and the amount of plowed agricultural land by 35 percent.[41] While the famine ended in 1922, hunger persisted during the years of the NEP, and local famines occurred in 1924, 1926, and 1928. Hiroaki Kuromiya evaluates the NEP: "Despite all the changes designed to improve the economy, a severe setback took place when, in 1921–2, a dreadful famine struck the country. . . . Half a century, in the 1970s, the NEP was touted by those seeking alternatives to Soviet-type socialism as a promising market socialism. In fact, the reality of the NEP was complex and painful. . . . In the recollection of Soviet citizens who grew up in the 1920s, the NEP era is associated more with hunger, pain and bitterness than with pleasure."[42] More difficult to answer is the question of whether famines occurred in Ukraine in 1928–1929. Mark Tauger refers to famine in the Ukrainian case in those years, but Soviet officials have defined the period of grain crisis as a "harvest failure."[43]

In 1928, the NEP led to a serious procurement crisis. Peasants sold less grain than the state needed because many were unsatisfied with the low prices for grain and high prices for industrial products. Grain sold declined as a proportion of production output. By the mid-1920s grain sales stood at a little more than half the prewar levels.[44] The leading faction around Stalin succeeded in introducing what it called "extraordinary measures"—meaning force—to confiscate grain instead. The NEP was replaced by collectivization and the "liquidation of the kulaks as a class" in 1929. An urban supply crisis in 1929 turned into a rural famine in the following years, in which 6–8 million people died.[45] Since the mid-1980s, academics have engaged in heated debates concerning the causes of the famine. Some have argued that the famine was organized by Stalin on purpose to commit genocide against the Ukrainian

nation or to break the resistance of the peasants (for more details, see chapters 1 and 7 below).[46] Most consider the radical collectivization of agriculture in 1929, ambitious plans for the development of heavy industry, high grain-procurement rates, food exports, droughts, and the bad harvest of 1931–1932 as major causes of the famine. Tauger seems to be the only Western scholar who believes that the weather played the major role.[47] He has placed the Soviet famine in a global context of droughts in the early 1930s and also believes that plant disease and rust harmed the harvest seriously.

In the mid-1930s Stalin introduced new policies, including the legalization of private plots and local markets. Compared to the first five-year plan, the second one, sometimes referred to among scholars as "Neo-NEP," paid more attention to consumer goods.[48] With the help of better harvests in 1935 and 1936, the country was able to recover from the worst effects of collectivization and famine. However, after the German invasion in 1941, the German administration tried to carry out the so-called "hunger plan," originally developed by Nazi bureaucrats in the Ministry of Agriculture.[49] As noted, in order to secure a long-term food supply for the German army and the Reich, it was planned that 30 million Soviet citizens should starve to death.[50] The Nazis planned to destroy and depopulate major cities in order to eliminate the centers of the working class by cutting off the consumer regions in the north of Russia from the food surplus regions in the south. However, the "hunger plan" proved unrealistic, and the German Army had insufficient troops to prevent mobility among different regions of the country. Nevertheless, hundreds of thousands or even millions of citizens in the occupied areas starved to death as a result of German confiscations,[51] and another approximately 3.3 million Soviet POWs died from hunger and disease in the camps or were shot.[52] Most died of hunger because the German leadership was not prepared to deal with a large number of Soviet POWs in the early stages of the war; it also found it expedient to get rid of them in order to save food for the German Army. Between 1941 and 1943, the German occupying power launched a policy to starve out Kiev in order to depopulate what it referred to as the "gypsy city."[53] As a result of the German blockade of Leningrad between 1941 and 1944, at least 750,000 people died of hunger, according to the lowest academic estimates.[54] Little is known about famine in the unoccupied areas of the Soviet Union, and some scholars have described the

situation in a general way as one of an "extreme lack of food," while others have estimated the number of deaths from hunger and disease at 1.5 million.[55]

Just two years after the end of World War II, the next famine occurred in the Soviet Union.[56] Moldavia and Ukraine were hit particularly hard. Death rates in the countryside were much higher than in the cities, but industrial workers and their families suffered as well. All together, between 1 and 2 million people died of hunger.[57] The famine of 1947 did not receive much attention in academia for a long time, and the first English-language monograph about it has only recently been published.[58] Two years after the German "war of annihilation" *(Vernichtungskrieg)*, the agricultural and transportation systems remained in devastating condition, and urban workers suffered from appalling conditions of housing and sanitation. The year 1947 saw one of the most serious global food crises in history, with China and India experiencing severe shortages.[59] In the postwar years, many in European countries such as France, Italy, the Netherlands, Greece, Finland, Yugoslavia, and Germany suffered from malnutrition. Central Europe experienced an extraordinarily long and cold winter in 1946 that in Germany is known as the "hunger winter"; the following summer was long and hot, lasting from April to September and preventing a fast recovery of the agricultural economy.[60] In 1946, the Soviet Union experienced a drought, and the harvest of 1946, as compared with the last harvest before the war (that of 1940) yielded only 64 percent as much grain and 69 percent as many potatoes.[61] Nicholas Ganson argues that the drought was not the only reason for this huge decline and that the hostility with which the Soviet government treated the peasants had much to do with it as well. Due to strict collective farm (*kolkhoz*) statutes and high procurement rates, peasants were not interested in raising production.[62] Many people were disappointed because they had hoped the government would relax controls as a result of the great victory over Nazi Germany. In reaction to the decline in production, the Soviet government decided to curb popular consumption, and millions of workers lost the right to ration cards; meanwhile, food prices rose. The government also exported grain (see below). Considering that the death toll of the 1947 famine was "only" between 1 and 2 million, it seems likely that many of the victims could have been saved if the Soviet government had stopped the exports. The U.S. government also

used food aid for political reasons, but it was not incapacitated by war as was the Soviet Union.

Donald Filtzer argues that the grain in the Soviet reserves would have been enough to prevent a high death toll.[63] While he does not believe that the Soviet government organized the famine on purpose, he does believe the demoralization of the population that ensued was convenient for the Stalinist elite.[64] Wheatcroft, however, finds that the amount of grain in the reserves has been overestimated. He considers the famine of 1947 to have been the result of severe drought together with the war, as distinguished from the "development famine" of 1931–1933. It was only with great luck that no major famine broke out during the war.[65] Taking a somewhat different view, Ganson sees multiple reasons for the famine, such as the callousness of officials and a lack of foresight on the part of the government, drought, demographic factors, and the devastation wrought by war.[66] First aid stations of the Ministry of Health and the Red Cross on collective farms, which had helped children especially at the beginning of the famine, were closed down in the autumn of 1946.[67] The government believed that stocks should be refilled in spite of the famine. Moreover, as noted, it even exported grain to maintain Soviet influence in the competition with the United States and to support coalition governments that included Communists in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and France. The authorities exported 10 percent of all grain procured in 1946 (1.2 million tons). The following year, the exports dropped by half (0.6 million tons).[68] From the harvest of 1947–1948, 2.4 million tons were exported, after a certain recovery had taken place.[69] Stalin did not acknowledge the 1947 famine in public, but in contrast to the early 1930s, he was willing to accept foreign aid in the form of war reparations from the United Nations.

No famine occurred after 1948 in the Soviet Union, but ten years after the victory of the revolution in China the most appalling famine in the history of mankind took place. Like that in the Soviet Union in the early 1930s, the famine in China broke out after a period of post–civil war recovery. In 1958, the Chinese government launched the Great Leap Forward to transform the country into a modern industrial nation within the span of just a few years. The Great Leap expanded from a campaign to overtake Great Britain in steel production into a strategy for achieving communism in the immediately foreseeable future. During the high tide of mass movements in the autumn of 1958, peasants

were organized into People's Communes and required to eat in public dining halls. By early 1959, famine broke out in several provinces, leading to a national crisis the following year. According to different estimates, between 15 and 45 million people died in the three-year period from 1959 to 1961.[70] The number of people who died as a result of the famine remains a controversial issue.

Scholars have given a multitude of causes to explain the famine. For example: highly exaggerated production results during the fall of 1958 resulted in unrealistic plans; procurement rates were too high; a massive transfer of manpower from agriculture to industry created imbalances that were impossible to cope with, exacerbated by grain exports and wasted food supplies in the public dining halls in the fall and winter of 1958; the radicalism of provincial leaders worked its damage in tandem with the refusal of Mao to change policies in the summer of 1959.[71] The ranking of these factors is still very controversial. In any event, in contrast to the Soviet case of 1931–1933, no one argues that the famine was organized on purpose. Most scholars agree that the bad weather was not in itself a sufficient cause for the deaths of so many and that the term "three years of natural disasters" *(sannian ziran zaihai)* is merely a euphemism.[72] Y. Y. Kueh carried out a study on agricultural instability and weather in China between 1931 and 1990. He estimates that 70 percent of the decline in grain output in 1960 was caused by bad weather. However, he believes that without Mao's decision to reduce the sown area and the excessive grain procurements in 1959, the majority of peasants who perished would have been able to survive the natural disasters of 1959–1961.[73] According to official statistics, 621,980,000 *mu* (1 *mu* = 1/15 hectare) were struck by natural disaster in 1959, 803,740,000 *mu* in 1960, and 803,460,000 *mu* in 1961.[74] The destructions in 1960 and 1961 were the worst the country had experienced between 1949 and 1986. However, the death rates were already declining in 1961, the droughts notwithstanding. Moreover, the years 1976–1978 saw almost the same degree of damage without any serious concomitant excess mortality.

That the greatest number of famine victims in the twentieth century were in China and the Soviet Union makes it even more surprising that no theory of famine has focused on these cases so far. Not one of the leading scholars of famine theory or history—such as Amartya

Sen, Stephen Devereux, Cormac Ó Gráda, or Alexander De Waal—is an expert on Soviet or Chinese history, and the work of these scholars has focused on India, Bangladesh, Ireland, and Africa. They make reference to the famines under socialism, but they have not carried out case studies or included Russian- or Chinese-language materials. In the fields of Chinese and Soviet studies, not much attention was paid to the issue of famine until the 1980s, although more people died as a result of famines under Stalin and Mao than as a result of terror or political repression. Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the improvement of access to county archives in China in the 1990s, several books and articles have been published on the Soviet famines of 1919–1921 and 1931–1933 and the famine that occurred during the Great Leap Forward in China between 1959 and 1961.[75] Contributions on these topics are fewer than on Stalin's "Great Purge" in the mid-1930s or the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). The hitherto marginal role of the Soviet Union and China in theories of famine begs the question of what the Socialist cases can contribute to the understanding of famine in general.

THE CONTEXT OF THIS BOOK

In this book, as noted, I will focus on comparing the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 and the Chinese famine of 1958–1961. Both broke out exactly ten years after peaceful construction and one to two years after a radical form of collectivization of agriculture was implemented. In contrast to the Soviet famines of 1920–1922 and 1947, these famines were not the results of war devastation. I call these catastrophes "Great Leap famines" because Stalin's and Mao's strategies of development were very similar. The Soviet leadership in 1929 and the Chinese leadership in 1958 believed that their countries could be industrialized at a speed without comparison in history. The entire populations in both countries were mobilized for the "great push," which was closely linked to radical collectivization and utopian programs. This is an important difference from the famines of 1920–1921 and 1947, when no social revolutions took place in the countryside. Wheatcroft defines the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 and the Chinese one as "development famines," in contrast to "static famines" before the Communist parties

came into power.[76] The former were caused not by chronic poverty but by radical and overambitious policies to escape from that poverty in a short period of time.

A nationwide outbreak of epidemics in times of famine was largely prevented after a Socialist economy was established; this was true of the Soviet famines of 1931–1933 and 1947 and also of the Chinese Great Leap famine.[77] The number of typhus cases during the 1931–1933 famine was less than two-thirds of that of the 1921 famine.[78] Ó Gráda describes the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 as the first modern famine in world history, being the first in which people died of hunger rather than of epidemic. In previous instances, such as the Irish famine of 1846–1850, it was disease, not hunger, that finally took its toll, with hunger weakening individuals in such a way that diarrhea or influenza had deadly results and with the breakdown of the usual hygienic order contributing to the outbreak of epidemics, as corpses often went unburied. During a drought it is difficult to wash, and floods can poison drinking water and food stocks.[79] Typhus was also the primary cause of death during the Russian famine of 1891. Alexander De Waal suggests that a model of health crisis would be most apt for explaining most of the famines in post–World War II Africa.[80] The death rates are often highest in refugee camps because a displaced population is concentrated in a crowded and unsanitary environment.[81] This model seems not to be useful for Socialist cases after 1921. In this book I will explain why and how the Socialist governments learned lessons about preventing famine. Unlike the Soviet Union and China, India and parts of Africa have to this day not succeeded in overcoming chronic poverty and everyday malnutrition.

The book is divided into three parts: "Comparing the Great Leap Famines under Stalin and Mao," "The Politicization of Hunger in Maoist China (1949–1962)," and "Famines on the Periphery in the Soviet Union and China." The first part is a comparison of the Great Leap famines under Stalin and Mao. Chapter 1, "The 'Tribute' of the Peasantry in Times of Food Availability Decline," focuses on relations between the state and peasants in the development of the famines. It will be argued that the Soviet and Chinese models for high-speed industrialization were mainly based on the exploitation of the peasantry. It will be shown that conflicts over the agricultural surplus escalated

in a deadly manner. In Chapter 2, "Protecting the Cities, Fighting for Survival of the Regime," it will be shown that the Soviet and Chinese governments protected the cities at the expense of the rural population during the famines. Why did Stalin and Mao consider the stability of the urban society key for the survival of the regimes? I will show that the establishment of internal passport systems was linked to the famines and explained why the prevention of rural migration was not successful during the Great Leaps.

Part 2 provides an empirical study of the Chinese case based on data in *Neibu Cankao* [Internal References, the news journal for high-ranking cadres], decisions of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), newspaper articles, and newly released sources from the PRC. Chapter 3, "Hierarchies of Hunger and Peasant-State Relations (1949–1958)," shows the developmental chronology of the conflicts between the peasantry and the state over food and disaster relief and the "politicization of hunger" after 1949. It will begin with a discussion of the research on peasant resistance and its definitions, which were controversial. During the first supply crisis of 1953, the government began to assume that many peasants would feign hunger in order to obtain relief from the state, and it became difficult for the government to distinguish between real and false reports of hunger. It will be argued that during the Socialist Education Campaign in 1957 hunger became a taboo topic. The Chinese government began to consider most complaints about hunger as an ideological problem and an attack on the Socialist order. Chapter 4, "Preventing Urban Famine by Starving the Countryside (1959–1962)," will show how the discourse about feigning hunger turned into violent campaigns in 1959 against peasants who were accused of hiding grain. I will argue that the central government did not ignore the famine or, rather, that it was heavily misinformed. Instead of curtailing the Great Leap, the leadership mobilized for more grain transfers from the countryside in order to keep rural famine from turning into an urban crisis. Beyond this it will be shown that the reform of the People's Communes and the slight increase of agricultural production in 1962 alone cannot explain why the famine ended. It will be argued that imports to feed major cities were very important in reducing the burden of the peasants. Furthermore, with the "sending down" of 20 million from the cities to the

countryside, the state shed the responsibility of feeding these people in the urban supply system and did not need to procure grain for them from the countryside.

Part 3 will focus on the impact of the famines on Ukraine and Tibet. In both regions, nationalists developed influential counter-narratives that the "occupier" had starved their nations on purpose. Chapter 5, "The Burden of Empire: The Crisis of 'Indigenization' in Ukraine and Tibet," will compare Soviet and Chinese policies toward "nationalities" against the background of imperial history. It will be argued that the famines destroyed the hopes of a peaceful integration of people on the periphery into the new multi-ethnic Socialist states. The following two chapters will examine food politics in the context of historiography and memory. Chapter 6, "'Eating Mice for the Liberation of Tibet': Hunger in Official Chinese History," will outline how experiences of hunger are used in the official Chinese narrative of the "liberation of Tibet" by the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Furthermore, it will show how Chinese scholars downplay the excess mortality caused by famine. Chapter 7, "'Genocide against the Nation': The Counter-Narratives of Tibetan and Ukrainian Nationalism," will compare how the experience of famine has been used to create master narratives by Irish, Ukrainian, and Tibetan nationalism. The importance of the diaspora in the rise of these narratives will be shown. This comparison will show that not only food but also experiences of hunger can be important in creating national identities.

The epilogue, "Lessons Learned—How the Soviet Union and China Escaped Famine," will explain how and why the Soviet Union since the mid-1950s and China after 1962 could prevent famine. The questions of whether an anti-famine contract was established between the government and the population and what kind of lessons the Socialist governments had learned will be answered. In the conclusion, I will summarize the main findings on how state socialism in the Soviet Union and China was related to famine. The priority lists of food supply in favor of important cities, the army and party cadres, workers in heavy industry, and intellectuals were the same in both countries. However, when the damages in agriculture were threatening industrial programs and the urban food supply, both governments had to make major concessions to the peasantry. As a result, the further road to the full socialization of agriculture and to communism was blocked. While the CCP

prevented urbanization for two decades to stabilize the burden of the peasants, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) expanded the welfare state to the villages after Stalin's death. In China, the failure of the Great Leap confirmed the distance between state and society as the state had to accept the "natural boundaries" of the villages. In both countries, the famines had a long-lasting impact on the relations between state and society.

SOURCES AND APPROACH

This book is the outcome of over ten years of research on the Great Leap Forward in general. Spending time in the Chinese countryside and interviewing peasants as a student in China, I realized that the famine was one of the most terrible periods of their lives. The famine left a very deep impression on them that is evident even today. The catastrophe also had a great impact on their memories of the Mao era. During my studies at the People's University of China (Beijing) at the Institute for History of the CCP from 2000 to 2002, I interviewed intellectuals who had been sent to the countryside during the Great Leap Forward in 1958 for my MA thesis.[82] For my PhD project on rural memory of the famine, I traveled several times to the countryside in Henan Province to interview old cadres and peasants, and I went to county archives.[83] Although this book does not use the oral history material or the focus on memory, it would have been impossible to develop this research agenda without these experiences and firsthand impressions from the Chinese countryside.

Developing a comparative history of famine in China and the Soviet Union is an enormous challenge, for with very few exceptions, comparative research on this topic has developed only in recent years.[84] However, from my own experience at two international workshops in 2009 and 2010 on famine in Russia and China, the Chinese scholars of the Great Leap Forward famine who started their academic careers after the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s have no training in Russian-language or Soviet history. Complicating matters further, scholars from Russia and Ukraine are now often embroiled in conflicts about the interpretation of their modern histories, and the re-creation of new national histories, instead of focusing on Soviet history per se. Thus a comparison with China, linking their countries to a global history

of socialism, is not among their highest priorities. Except for retired Columbia University professor Thomas Bernstein, no scholar recently working on the topic has fully commanded both Russian and Chinese. I wrote the comparative parts of this book as part of a larger group of international scholars since, as a China scholar myself, I frequently discuss my research with colleagues from Soviet studies such as Stephen Wheatcroft, Andreas Kappeler, and Hiroaki Kuromiya.

This book does not offer the reader a new case study based on Russian-language sources, but it does present a solid comparison based on the state of the art in both fields and fresh findings based on Chinese internal documents and newspapers. In recent years, the press of the Party School of the Central Government in China has published multivolume biographies of important political leaders and economic planners such as Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Chen Yun, and Li Xiannian.[85] In contrast to former publications, these biographies are based on classified materials from the Central Party Archives and provide very detailed information on the Great Leap and the famine. Several Chinese scholars have also published monographs in Hong Kong on the famine that are based on archival sources that go beyond the official version.[86] A critical reading of these sources can contribute to a new understanding of the events. Frank Dikötter and his collaborator, Zhou Xun, got access to many provincial archives in China and were able to see files that had been classified.[87] However, Dikötter's book, *Mao's Great Famine*, is an example that exclusive access to new sources is no guarantee that an author will develop a new explanation for a given event. *Mao's Great Famine* includes a long list of atrocities and horror stories from provincial archives, but it does not explain why the famine occurred or what caused the huge local variations. One has the impression that the Chinese people were all victims of a mad leader, Mao Zedong.[88] In her book, Zhou Xun provides 121 extracts from archival documents translated into English.[89] Most of the documents describe developments on the county level or below and give new insights into violence by local cadres and the peasants' struggle for survival. However, it seems that only a few new insights about the central government can be found in documents that were accessible in the provincial archives. Only one document in the book deals with a decision of Mao Zedong. It is likely that in order to study the decisions of the central government in a systematic way, based on archival sources, access to the Central Party Ar-

chives in Beijing would be necessary. However, this archive is not open to foreign scholars, and only a very few Chinese historians from the inner elite can access the files.

This book shows that even without access to the Central Party Archives it is possible to look at the Chinese famine from a new angle based on rich source materials. To analyze food politics on a national level, which is the goal of this book, it is necessary to include all kind of written sources. For example, still very useful are internal publications and statistics from the 1980s, when the CCP leadership tried to understand the failures of the Mao era in order to readjust the economy and society.[90] For example, the internal publication *Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China* provides a very detailed chronology of decisions and discussions on food politics by the central government between 1949 and the mid-1980s.[91] This publication is a good starting point for systematic research of developments from the establishment of the state monopoly for the purchase and sale of grain in 1953 to the famine and the readjustment of the economy in 1961. As noted, I have also systematically studied the internal news reports for high-ranking cadres in *Neibu Cankao*, distributed by the Xinhua News Agency. The value of *Neibu Cankao* for studying Maoist China is controversial among Western scholars. However, I will show that it provides very interesting reports that contribute to the understanding of urban-rural conflicts in 1957 and the politicization of hunger. Furthermore, I have used collections of decisions of the Central Committee and Mao Zedong; newspapers such as the central organ of the party, *Renmin Ribao* [People's Daily]; journals such as *Liangshi* [Grain] and *Baiyi Zazhi* [August 1 Magazine]; memoirs of party cadres; grain gazettes; and the research of Chinese scholars such as Luo Pinghan regarding food politics.[92]

In this book, I will bring to bear various methods in order to present a social history of hunger in the Soviet Union and China. And hunger does indeed have a history. James Vernon writes: "Hunger's perpetual presence and apparently unchanging physical characteristics belie the way in which its meaning, and our attitudes toward the hungry, change over time."[93] As Vernon points out, "The struggle to define and regulate hunger produced its own networks of power, its own political constituencies, its own understanding of the responsibilities of government, and its own forms of statecraft."[94] Some research regarding the Soviet

and Chinese cases has been done with reference to the elite levels, government policies, economic history, and villages. Some scholars also have tried to explain the huge local variations of the death rates at the provincial level or politics at the provincial level in the Chinese case.[95]

This book will focus on political and social responses to hunger in the context of the Soviet and Chinese Great Leap famines. The term "food politics" includes government policies on the central level (such as eating habits, grain procurement, rationing systems, food exports and imports, relief measures, and approaches to grain storage) as well as the responses of the rural and urban society (adoption, resistance, manipulation, and so on). How and what people eat is no trivial matter, as many cultural and political studies of food have shown in the last decade: "Food touches everything. Food is the foundation of every economy. It is a central pawn in political strategies of states and households. Food marks social differences, boundaries, bonds, and contradictions. Eating is an endlessly evolving enactment of gender, family, and community relationships."[96]

To understand the Great Leap famines, the relationship between state and peasantry is crucial. I consider the famines to have been, first and foremost, a deadly escalation of the struggle between the Socialist governments and the rural societies over grain. I owe a substantial debt to other scholars such as Gao Wangling, Ralph Thaxton, Jean Oi, Thomas Bernstein, Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, and Steven Wheatcroft, and I build on their work here. However, I will look at the Great Leap famines from a new angle. My approach is different from the narratives that are popular in Chinese studies, such as those of "peasant resistance," the success of the reform of the People's Communes, or the "madness" of the leadership. Thaxton and Gao Wangling have portrayed the Chinese famine as a struggle between the state and the peasants (for further details, see chapter 3). Both have emphasized the importance of peasant resistance or "counter-actions" *(fan xingwei)* against the state.[97] Such a narrative is too limited because it does not take all groups within the supply system into account.[98] Soviet studies scholars have also argued that the degree of peasant resistance has often been exaggerated.[99] A further point worth making, despite its obviousness, is that the state did not just take the grain from the countryside and dump it into the sea but had to feed the rapidly increasing urban population, the army, and peasants in non-surplus and disaster areas. Russia and China were frequently struck by severe natural

disasters, and peasants in the disaster areas could not survive without state intervention. As a result, the peasantry was even more vulnerable if the state failed to organize efficient relief such as during the Great Leap famines. In the Chinese case, the relief system has not yet become a subject of research. The famines can be understood only if we look in a comprehensive manner at all the dynamics of urban and rural relations and the food supply.[100] Therefore, it is also not enough to analyze distribution and consumption inside the villages. Dennis Tao Yang has proved that only during the heyday of the Great Leap in the autumn and winter of 1958 was consumption in the newly established public dining halls *(gonggong shitang)* uncontrolled, and the limited period of "over-consumption" was too short to explain the deaths of millions in 1960.[101] In the historiography of the Great Leap Forward in China and also in Western scholarship it is popular to explain the famine as an outcome of the introduction of the radical version of the People's Communes in 1958 and to explain the end of the disasters by means of the reforms of this institution.[102] In 1961, the government allowed the peasants to have private plots, and some provincial governments experimented with family-based farming. I will argue that the increase in agricultural production as a result of these reforms in 1961 and 1962 cannot explain the end of the famine but that such an explanation needs to consider the readjustment of urban-rural relations as a whole. I will also test the "entitlement approach" of Amartya Sen, which stresses that people can also die due to a lack of entitlement to food, even when no decline of food availability appears in the country.[103] I will also challenge Sen's thesis that the famine in China can be explained by a lack of democracy and a free press.[104]

In contrast to Wheatcroft and Walker, who have focused on the "hard" statistical facts of the Soviet and Chinese supply systems, I will also include social and cultural responses to hunger and eating. I will show that the definition of hunger, and the question of how much food is enough to live on, were ongoing sources of conflict between the people and the state. Instead of an "objective" scientific definition of hunger, I will show how hunger became increasingly politicized. The eating habits of different regions and the cultural value of crops will be taken into account here as well.

To date, only a few scholars have placed the Great Leap famines in a broader historical context of frequent famines and chronic poverty.[105] Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun try to explain the Great Leap disaster

in China in terms of the dynamics in the CCP leadership starting in 1955.[106] If we take the historical burden of underdevelopment and new challenges such as the rapid expansion of the urban population into account, it is obvious that the famines cannot be reduced to wrong decisions by the leadership. As a matter of fact, Stalin and Mao were responsible for the deaths of millions because the new policies and relief efforts that stopped the famines were introduced much too late. However, I will argue that the human factor can be understood only in interaction with the structural conditions.

Without neglecting the great suffering of the Soviet and Chinese peasants, this book might be called a "revisionist" contribution to the debate on famine.[107] Various scholars have focused on famines under Socialist regimes, but it should also be part of the story that the Soviet Union after 1947 and China after 1962 were able to prevent deadly famines. I hope this book will contribute to the understanding of famine in the twentieth century and provide insights into the failure of the first attempts to build a Socialist society.

I

Comparing the Great Leap Famines under Stalin and Mao

But, unfortunately, freedom alone is not enough, by far. If there is a shortage of bread, a shortage of butter and fats, a shortage of textiles, and if housing conditions are bad, freedom will not carry you very far. It is very difficult, comrades, to live on freedom alone.

—Josef Stalin, November 1935

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1 The "Tribute" of the Peasantry in Times of Food Availability Decline

THE PARADIGM OF THE "Chinese way to socialism" was so predominant between the 1970s and the early twenty-first century that during that period only a very few Western scholars carried out serious comparative research on the Soviet Union and China.[1] One might argue that the countries are hard to compare because of Russia's long tradition of communal land ownership *(mir)*, which was strengthened by the land reform after the October Revolution, while in China in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, peasants owned the land or at least the soil.[2] Furthermore, Bolshevism was mainly an urban phenomenon, whereas the Chinese Communists mobilized peasants in order to "encircle the cities from the countryside" *(nongcun baowei chengshi)*. However, differences aside, several famines took place after the revolutions in both China and the Soviet Union, and in this chapter I will rethink the comparison between the two countries specifically in light of these catastrophes.

The chapter will focus on relations between the state and the peasantry in the development of the famines. The struggle over the agricultural surplus is central to understanding the famines. First, this chapter will show that both Communist parties inherited a heavy burden from history. They came to power in "lands of famine." Russia and China were both backward agrarian empires with a very small population of

industrial workers. Second, the impact of several Soviet developmental models on China will be evaluated. However, the model of heavy industrial development was based on the exploitation of the peasants. The governments demanded sacrifices from both the rural and urban populations and the curbing of food consumption. Third, the roots of both Communist parties in the countryside will be compared. It will be shown that the necessity of winning over the peasantry for socialism and the extraction of resources from the countryside for the development of industry were conflicting goals. In the "dual society" of the planned economy, peasants were second-class citizens. Fourth, the question will be raised as to what impact collectivization and radical social transformation in the countryside had on the famine. Fifth, I will argue that in the system of collective agriculture, peasants had an interest in manipulating data and concealing some production. Last, I will explain why both governments continued to export grain during the famine. In a thought experiment, I will estimate how many lives could have been saved if the governments had ended the exports. Further, the question of whether Stalin and Mao deliberately used the famine to commit the mass murder of millions of peasants will be evaluated.

THE BURDEN OF HISTORY: LANDS OF FAMINE

Among many liberal and leftist intellectuals of Russia and China, the prerevolutionary countries had long been perceived as "lands of famine." Some Western scholars are questioning this perception and argue that agricultural development in late imperial Russia, late imperial China, and the Chinese Republic after 1911 was much better than believed. However, I will argue that both countries, at least in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, should be described as "lands of famine." In Russia and China backward and illiterate peasants were the large majority of the population. In the Russian empire in 1897, only 13.2 percent of the population lived in cities. During the last year of tsarist rule in 1917, the empire had 3.5 million industrial workers out of 175 million subjects. In China, the urbanization rate stood at 10.6 percent in 1949.[3]

Russia and China had experienced deadly famines predating the victories of the Socialist revolutions. In China, millions had perished during the Qing dynasty and under Republican rule. Natural disasters

such as floods and drought went hand in hand with famine. In 1949, China was one of the poorest countries in the world, if not the poorest.[4] Mike Davis makes the argument that famine is seldom caused by nature alone and that society and nature are continually interacting. How a society responds to natural disasters and environmental change is something that matters, and dams, water irrigation, population growth, the use of natural resources, deforestation, and other such factors have an important impact on the natural environment.[5] According to Davis, 19.5–30 million people died in the famines of 1876–1879 and 1896–1900 during the last decades of the Qing dynasty.[6] The Chinese leftist and editor of the *People's Daily*, Deng Tuo, wrote his famous book, *A History of Famine Relief in China (Zhongguo jiuhuangshi)*, in 1936. Deng estimated the deaths caused by natural disasters between 1810 and 1888 at over 62.78 million and under Republican rule between 1920 and 1936 at over 18.35 million.[7] These were very rough estimates. The Chinese scholar Xia Mingfang has carried out research on deaths related to floods and drought based on newspapers of the Republican era and studies in the People's Republic. He believes that in all droughts in the Republican period between 1911 and 1948 with casualties of over 10,000, around 15,699,186 died, and in floods, around 2,507,007.[8]

In the context of the Japanese invasion of China and the war of resistance, famine once again occurred. In June 1938, the nationalist government destroyed the dikes of the Yellow River in order to stop the advance of the Japanese Army on the city of Wuhan. The resulting flood, as well as the famine and epidemics caused by it, created close to 4 million refugees and killed as many as 900,000 people. The flood only bought the Chinese government time to move west, and Wuhan fell in October 1938.[9] The government did not admit responsibility but instead in the media accused the Japanese of destroying the dikes, using the flood as an incentive for nationalist mobilization, and recruiting flood victims as soldiers. During the famine in Henan Province in 1943, the government acted in a very similar fashion. In contrast to the efforts of 1931, both the central government and the provincial government in Henan kept secret the famine of 1943, which was caused by drought and by radical efforts of grain procurement to feed the Chinese troops fighting a war against Japan. The famine went unmentioned by the country's censored media until it was reported in the United States.[10]

The Guomindang (GMD), which came into power in 1928, experienced only limited control over the countryside and imported grain, mainly from the United States. In the early years of GMD rule, China imported around 2.1 million tons of grain per year between 1929 and 1931.[11] Some scholars have argued that the living standard of Chinese peasants improved between 1870 and the early 1930s.[12] Dikötter and other scholars believe that the rural economy boomed in Republican China before it too was affected by the world economic crisis in the early 1930s.[13] For peasants not only is the situation in "normal years" relevant, but so too is the question of whether they are able to survive a famine. The shocking extent of human suffering resulting from famine is not taken into account by the scholars who glorify the Republican era as a time of modernization and "openness" to the world. Dikötter, who might have written *Mao's Great Famine* out of moral outrage,[14] does not even dedicate a footnote to the millions of famine victims in *The Age of Openness*, his book on Republican China, which was on the right track, according to him, before the Communists derailed it. He mentions only 400,000 casualties of the major wars between 1917 and 1930 but not the approximately 10 million victims of the North China drought (1928–1930).[15] Then he asks why these 400,000 are never compared to the millions of deaths caused by the mid-nineteenth-century rebellions, the Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution.

While China was indeed a "land of famine" in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Russian situation is more difficult to access. In the early twentieth century, many Russian liberals and Marxists portrayed the countryside as a place of hunger and misery. In the last twenty years various scholars have questioned this perception.[16] There is no doubt that Russia was a much richer country than China. Between 1909 and 1913, Russian grain production per capita was around 515 kg per year.[17] In China in 1952, the rural population produced only 326 kg per capita.[18] The difference between Russian and Chinese production was even greater because potatoes count as grain in China but not in Russia.[19] (In China, wheat, paddy rice, millet, sorghum, corn, and soybeans count as the six major grains.) While the GMD government had to import grain to feed the country, Russia was able to export around 10 million tons of grain per year between 1901 and 1913.[20] Wheatcroft argues that the last thirty years of the tsarist regime saw

a trend toward increasing grain production per capita. However, in 1889–1892 and 1905–1908, Russia faced an agricultural crisis and a crisis in the living standard of the peasants.[21] David Moon, one of the most "revisionist" scholars, argues that most peasants in central Russia between the late seventeenth and late nineteenth centuries were not prosperous but that it would be wrong to assume that they lived in grinding poverty.[22] He believes, with the exception of the famine of 1891, that starvation was relatively rare among peasants in late imperial Russia.[23] At the same time, he argues that many peasants refused to introduce new crop systems because like peasants in other countries, "who lived close to the margins of subsistence," they wished to minimize risk in order to prevent starvation in the case of a harvest failure.[24] R. E. F. Smith and David Christian present a more negative view on rural living standards than Moon. They argue that the level of nutrition varied among different rural strata and was influenced by the natural cycles of the year. Peasants ate best after the harvest in August, when livestock were also slaughtered. During the winter all fresh foods, such as dairy products and fresh vegetables, disappeared. They were replaced by pickled cabbage, beetroot, and salted meat. The hardest times were spring and summer, when bread sometimes ran short, especially in poor families.[25]

Despite improvements in production, Russian agriculture was highly vulnerable to natural disasters. Arcadius Kahan counted seventeen years of natural calamities and nineteen years of significantly lower-than-average population growth between 1858 and 1914. He provides a long list of natural calamities affecting agriculture and the food supply and highlights natural disasters and famines of national importance in 1822, 1832–1833, 1848, 1855, 1859, and 1891.[26] For the imperial decade, detailed data of excess mortality due to famine, such as those in the Chinese case, are not available. It seems that compared to China the death toll from the famines under the tsarist regime was much lower, even after the smaller population is taken into account. Between 1602 and 1604 a terrible famine occurred under tsar Boris Godunov. Malnutrition led to the outbreak of disease, and more than 127,000 people perished in Moscow alone.[27] The last great famine in tsarist Russia occurred in 1891, in which 375,000–500,000 people perished.[28] Despite this high number of deaths, only one monograph in English has been written on the 1891 famine.[29]

Russia and China had different traditions in dealing with natural disasters and hunger. According to Confucian values, the emperor had the responsibility of saving the lives of his subjects in times of famine.[30] Within the Confucian framework, famines were not caused just by natural disasters but by the interaction among nature, heaven, and the wrongful actions of the emperor and the people more generally. These Confucian values were not empty rhetoric, for in the eighteenth century, the Qing dynasty had the most elaborate relief system in world history, based on state and local granaries that were used in times of shortage to stabilize food prices and provide relief to the urban and rural poor.[31] This relief system was weakened when imperialism entered China after the Opium War of 1840 and the Taiping Rebellion (1850–1860), resulting in a crisis in the Qing dynasty. After the foundation of the Republic in 1912 and the following years of warlordism and civil wars, the state granary system became almost nonexistent.[32] Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley has argued that in the late Qing period, the modernizers in the administration were already less interested in famine relief than the more conservative and traditional Confucian officials were. The modernizers argued that the budget was needed to build up a strong navy instead of its being spent on the relief programs for the terrible famine in Shanxi Province, and they hoped that economic development and modernization could overcome poverty and famine in the long run.[33] It also seems that the GMD focused all its efforts on unifying the nation and fighting its enemies. Traditional Confucian values of feeding the hungry in times of famine played no central role in the Chinese politics of that time.

In the Russian empire, no effective famine relief system such as that operating during the heyday of the Qing dynasty ever existed. However, the tsar assumed some paternalistic responsibility for his subjects as well. Since the early nineteenth century, the tsars had undertaken efforts to build up a local granary system and new institutions that were intended to prevent famine. Richard Robbins believes that these efforts had only limited success due to the weakness of the rural administration and the low level of provincial culture.[34] The whole system relied heavily on the intervention of the central government. However, during the famine of 1891, the government mobilized very extensive resources for relief.[35] At that time, many liberals and Marxists attacked the government for poor performance in the relief effort and consid-

ered the famine a harbinger of the end of autocratic rule. Some scholars today believe that the government did a relatively good job and that much of the mortality among the peasants can be attributed to a typhus epidemic rather than to hunger.[36] At the height of the famine, over 11 million people received supplemental rations from the official supply system. Heinz-Dietrich Löwe asserts it is myth that the government response was characterized by panic and incompetence.[37] Furthermore, the countryside recovered quite fast from the famine.[38] Ironically, despite the relief efforts, the famine called into question the legitimacy of the imperial government. By the end of the nineteenth century, only backward and colonial countries such as China and India were suffering from famine but not the great powers in Europe. Robbins argues that in this sense, the famine was the beginning of the end of imperial Russia.[39]

It could be argued that China had a more elaborate system of granaries and famine relief in imperial times than did Russia, but unlike many countries in Europe, China never established an effective state system of distribution and food rationing during either world war. While in countries such as Germany, France, and Russia, the governments took over the responsibility of feeding the population and the army by means of rationing, the GMD government in Chongqing issued ration cards to only a small number of state employees and workers during the war against Japan (1937–1945).[40] In contrast to China, in 1916 the tsarist government established an extensive state bureaucracy to manage the food supply.[41] This management system during wartime created intense pressure for the government in Russia. Food shortages in the army and factories that began in 1916–1917 could hardly be blamed on the market or on speculators. Modern Russian history differs from that of China in that the Republican period in Russia was a very short episode, lasting only from the February Revolution of 1917 to the October Revolution of 1917. Supply shortages and hunger played an important role in the context of the February Revolution. Eric Lohr argues that the supply problems during the second half of the war were not a result of an actual shortage of grain. As a result of the blockade by enemy countries, massive exports were shut off, leaving more food for the army and populace. However, military commanders often banned "exports" from their region to feed their own troops. Peasants rebelled against the government's system of price regulation. "Unwilling to sell grain to buy

industrial products at inflated prices, peasants in increasing numbers chose to store their grain, feed it to their livestock or illicitly convert it into alcohol rather than deliver it to market as inflation accelerated in late 1916 and early 1917."[42] The breakdown of the Russian Army in 1917 was also linked to food supply problems. In October 1917 the Bolsheviks seized power and promised the people "bread and peace."[43] Before the establishment of the People's Republic of China, in the liberated areas in the northern region, the Communist government used the slogan "We will let nobody starve" *(bu ran e'si yi ge ren)* during a campaign for famine relief.[44]

It is necessary to look at famine in a historical context. Large segments of the population experienced hunger and at least the threat of deadly famines in China between 1876 and the late 1970s and in Russia between 1891 and the end of the Stalinist era in the 1950s. The two "great famines" of 1931–1933 in the Soviet Union and 1959–1961 in China can be better understood in the context of this century of hunger, not only of war and terror. While famines did not always occur in the same regions, many people experienced more than one such catastrophe of hunger in their lifetimes. For example, a peasant who was born in 1890 in the south of Russia and died in 1950 could have experienced famine in 1891, 1921–1922, 1931–1933, during World War II, and in 1946–1947. Times of recovery were short. Between 1923 and 1927, no serious nationwide famine occurred. The years after the end of the famine in the mid-1930s were considered the "good years" under the rule of Stalin. In 1941, the German Army attacked the Soviet Union, and the end of the war was followed by the next famine in 1946–1947.

Some scholars argue that the Russian empire could have fed its population and still exported grain, and they regard the famines of 1921, 1941–1943, and 1947 as war-related disasters. They see the famine of 1931–1933 as having been an exceptional, man-made famine during peacetime, caused by the ruthless policies of Stalin, and they consequently hold that Russia should not have been labeled a "land of famine." However, taking into account the long list of disasters, each encompassing millions of deaths and all occurring within the lifetime of a single peasant, Russia and the Soviet Union were indeed a "land of famine," at least between 1891 and 1947. Wheatcroft argues that four serious droughts in fifty years (1891, 1921, 1931, and 1946) qualify

it as a "land of famine," even if the war famines are not included.[45] The Bolsheviks seized power not in 1913, when Russia was one of the largest grain exporters in the world and agricultural production had been increasing for two decades, but in 1917, when the country had been ruined by the world war, which was followed by the Civil War. Many other countries had also participated in the world war without facing famine. For the victims of the famines between 1891 and 1947 it would have been cold comfort indeed that Russia was able to feed itself in theory.

Demographers James Z. Lee and Wang Feng used data on population, marriage, and food consumption between the years 1700 and 2000 to disprove the Malthusian myth about China. Malthus had identified China as an example of a society in which famine and disease served as "checks" for uncontrolled population growth.[46] Lee and Wang have shown that in the traditional Chinese society, families and clans practiced birth control and that deliberate mortality through sex-selective infanticide (of girls) limited population growth. They believe that politics and not uncontrolled population growth caused famine, especially during the Great Leap Forward.[47] While the critique of the Malthusian legacy is convincing, Lee and Wang do not explain the reasons for the frequent famines in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. From a bird's eye view and with a focus on three hundred years, they can claim that famines were relatively few and had a very limited impact on restraining population growth.[48]

Taking the position of a Chinese peasant, we can get a different perspective. A peasant who was born in Henan Province in 1900 might have experienced the famines of 1931, 1943, and 1959–1961. Between the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and the famine of 1959, the life of an ordinary peasant was not in danger only in the brief span between 1950 and 1958. Periods of food security and social stability were short and not the norm in the life of peasants in Russia between 1891 and 1947 and in China between the late Qing dynasty and 1962. Did peasants accept the Socialist governments' claims that they could conquer famine once and for all in the first years after the revolutions? Could one famine destroy the legitimacy of the new regimes in countries where many peasants had experienced food insecurity several times in their lives?

MODELS OF STALINISM AND CHINA

The new revolutionary regimes promoted industrialization as the way to escape hunger and poverty. Here I will discuss what models of development appeared in the Soviet Union and what impact they had on China. In general, the Soviet model is characterized by a centralized planned economy, with state-owned industry and collective agriculture, and a one-party state guided by the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, with the party practicing bureaucratic and coercive command over specialists and the cultural sector. Some scholars have argued that despite the radical experiences of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, the Soviet model remained intact in China twenty years after its introduction in the mid-1950s.[49] Recently, Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth Perry have questioned the usefulness of focusing on dominant institutions in the Chinese case, arguing that the CCP promoted a "guerrilla" style of politics based on trial and error with various local models, with the result that processes are very important in understanding Chinese politics.[50] However, Thomas Bernstein distinguishes among three different Soviet models: (1) a more moderate model developed by Lenin during the NEP, combining aspects of both planned and market systems; (2) revolutionary Stalinism, embodied in the Soviet "Socialist offensive" of 1929–1934; and (3) "bureaucratic middle-class Stalinism," which emerged in the late Stalinist era after World War II and emphasized stability, formality, and professionalism.[51] From the founding of the PRC in 1949 to the mid-1950s, China learned from the third variant, the bureaucratic model of late Stalinism, and it reframed economic, educational, and cultural institutions in accordance with the Soviet example. The first Chinese five-year plan (1953–1957) had a strong Soviet influence, and Soviet experts played a key role in many aspects of Chinese politics and the economy. However, both the campaign to suppress the counterrevolution *(zhenya fangeming)* and the land reform relied on mass mobilization, something unknown under late Soviet Stalinism.[52] Mao himself felt closer to the revolutionary Stalinism of the earlier 1930s, and by the mid-1950s he had begun to attack the bureaucratic model. With the Great Leap Forward, China began to search for its own path with the People's Communes, militarization of the rural workforce, and a greater decentralization of the economic system. Bernstein argues that the Great Leap owed a debt to

revolutionary Stalinism and to such hallmarks of extreme "war communism" as the mobilization of the masses for a radical transformation of society. One difference was that Mao took the utopian goals more seriously, while Stalin turned against egalitarianism in 1931.[53] I would argue that the Soviet "Socialist offensive" shares even more similarities with the Great Leap if one limits the comparison to the period of "revolutionary Stalinism," from 1928 to 1931. Sheila Fitzpatrick calls this period the "Soviet Cultural Revolution," where the party leadership mobilized the masses in an anti-bureaucratic drive against "bourgeois" specialists and academic authorities. The party emphasized the wisdom of workers as opposed to the "book knowledge" of experts and artists, who were judged to have lost contact with the lives of ordinary people.[54] Urban communes of workers practiced an egalitarian wage system, and architects developed plans for communal apartments with public dining halls and no space for family life.[55] While during Stalin's Great Leap young and radical activists replayed the October Revolution and the Civil War in their attacks on the bureaucracy, the CCP celebrated the "guerrilla style" *(youji zuofeng)* of the Yan'an period during the peak of the Great Leap Forward in 1958.[56] Radicals of both parties dreamed of the "new Communist man," Stalin's term for the record-breaking and competitive Stakhanovite workers. In contrast to this non-utopian definition, Chinese radical thinkers such as Chen Boda promoted the notion of an "all-around man" who would simultaneously be peasant, worker, soldier, and intellectual.[57] It was only in 1931 that Stalin rehabilitated the intellectuals and experts and made it clear that utopian experiments had to be stopped. In the years that followed, a bureaucratic model was established in the economy, in education, and in the military that provided privileges to experts and promoted "middle-class" values regarding family and consumerism to a degree unknown in China during the Mao era.[58]

Of the Soviet models, revolutionary Stalinism is closer than bureaucratic late Stalinism to the path of the early Great Leap Forward. However, the approach of first examining a Soviet model and then describing its similarities and differences with the Chinese case has its limits. The famines were crises of the models, and these crises resulted in important transformations in the economic structures of both countries. These catastrophes called into question all the certainties in which the Socialist leaders had believed. "Model" is in fact too static a concept

for a full comprehension of these major catastrophes. Moreover, to the extent that it is fruitful to consider models, the famines were failures of the plans and visions that the Socialist governments had developed during better times. Instead of working with Soviet or Chinese "models," I prefer to start with an exploration of the characteristics of famine under socialism in these two large agrarian empires and then ask what the outcomes tell us about the nature of the party-state in the Soviet Union and China. For me it makes most sense to compare the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 and the Chinese famine of 1958–1961. As noted, the famines that occurred in the Soviet Union under Socialist rule between 1918 and 1947 varied greatly in character. For example, it is doubtful that the Bolsheviks, even with better policies, would have been able to prevent the famines of 1921 or during the German aggression. During the first years after the October Revolution, traditional communal ownership of land was still dominant, and institutions of Socialist planning were weak and in the very early stages of development. In contrast to the war-related famines, the disasters of 1931–1933 and 1959–1961 occurred in peacetime and in the context of radical programs to transform the society. A planned economy, state industry, and collective agriculture were established just two years before the famines took place. The Soviet Union was devastated by the terrible famine that came thirteen years after the victory of the revolution and ten years after peaceful reconstruction, and China experienced its famine ten years after the CCP had come into power. To use the terms of János Kornai, the Socialist systems were still in a period of revolutionary transformation, and the classic system had not yet been fully established.[59] According to Kornai, in the classic system the bureaucracy ran the country based on administrative routine and the society's enthusiasm during the period of revolutionary transformation had already disappeared. During the leaps, administration was often chaotic, and in the beginning some parts of the population participated enthusiastically in it. In contrast to the early 1930s, the Soviet famine of 1947 occurred when the classical system was already fully established. Kornai's distinction between "revolutionary transformation" and the "classic system" is quite similar to Bernstein's differentiation between revolutionary and bureaucratic Stalinism. The Soviet collectivization of agriculture and the first five-year plan combined utopian elements such as the policies for eliminating private property in the countryside (at

least in 1929) with overambitious plans and production targets. These elements are very similar in the Chinese Great Leap.[60] The extraordinarily polarized political atmosphere made it difficult for Stalin to acknowledge the famine in public, and, complicating matters further, the success of his "Great Leap" was linked to the power struggle with the more moderate faction of Nikolai Bukharin. The so-called right-wing opposition was already crushed, but Stalin had to prove that his radical approach to end the NEP was right. In the Chinese case, Mao, as the supreme leader of the CCP, also played a key role in the development of the famine. The radicalization of the Great Leap in the summer of 1959 was caused by a power struggle between Mao and the minister of defense, Peng Dehuai, that made it extremely problematic for Mao to acknowledge the famine. Last but not least, a comparison between the two Great Leap famines is easy to make simply because a great deal of research has been done on that Soviet famine but not on the earlier or later ones.

THE ROOTS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

In what way can the relations between the Communist Party–state and the peasants contribute to understanding the famines? In the scholarship on Russia, the views of the Bolshevik party are often described as anti-peasant. In contrast, Mao has been portrayed as more friendly toward the peasants.[61] Today many question this perception, and some scholars go so far as to describe the collectivization as a "war against the peasantry" in both the Soviet and Chinese contexts.[62] One of the main differences between the CCP and the CPSU was the stronger penetration of the Chinese party-state into the countryside, while Bolshevism was an urban phenomenon and Russian communism had its first painful experiences with rural policies only after the October Revolution. While the CCP established party organizations in almost every Chinese village (except for ethnic minority regions) in the first years of Communist rule, the Soviet party had only weak ties in the countryside in 1917. Nor was the land divided among the peasants by the party; rather, land reform was enforced by rural revolts from below. The Bolsheviks had to enforce the original land reform program of the Social Revolutionaries, who were more popular than Lenin's party in the countryside. The

law on land reform legalized the distributions from below and restored the collective use of land by the village communes. Lenin admitted that he had opposed this program for a long time but that the revolution had to fulfill the will of the peasant masses.[63] During the Civil War, the requisitions by the Bolsheviks tested the peasants' limits of survival. In 1920–1921, after the defeat of the White armies, many "green" peasant uprisings took place that were viewed as dangerous threats by the Bolshevik leadership. The most famous of these took place under the populist A. S. Antonov, who was able to unite forty thousand peasants in his guerrilla army.[64] The necessity of introducing the NEP was considered a defeat or retreat by many Bolshevik leaders.

In the mid-1920s, the party leadership was concerned that the kulaks and traditional elites had once again taken over power in the villages and that they would control many Soviet organizations. "Kulaks" refers to the richer peasants, although the Bolsheviks never defined the term clearly. In 1929, the CPSU had a membership of 1.43 million people, around 302,000 of them born in the countryside. That meant that 19.7 percent of all members had peasant origins; 12 percent actually worked in agriculture.[65] In order to enforce collectivization in the countryside, the party could not rely on rural party members alone but also had to mobilize workers from the cities. The so-called "25,000ers," workers who volunteered to go to the country in November 1929, played an important role in the campaign for and in the administration of the early collective farms.[66] To enforce collectivization in 1930–1931 over 2 million kulaks were deported to remote areas and over 30,000 were shot.[67] Many of them died of hunger during deportation or in exile. During the campaign, ordinary peasants who resisted collectivization could easily be labeled "kulaks" as well. As mentioned, some have argued that collectivization could be understood as a new war against the peasantry; some scholars have justified this interpretation given the violent culture of requisition that was a legacy of the Civil War. However, one should not forget that some elements of the rural poor and activists supported Stalin's leap.[68] In the first years after collectivization, the party was able to recruit new members: between January 1930 and July 1932 rural membership in the party rose from 20.2 to 26.6 percent.[69] Such an increase was hardly enough to establish tight party control in the countryside. In 1932 only 20 percent of the kolkhozes contained a party unit. The famine, and Stalin's dissatisfac-

tion with the rural cadres who could not fulfill the procurement rates in many areas, stopped the rise of the rural party. The leadership launched several purges, as a result of which rural party membership declined from about 850,000 in October 1933 to 296,000 in January 1937.

In this regard the Chinese experience was dramatically different from the Soviet one. During the land reform (1947–1951), the CCP not only divided 43 percent of the land among the peasants, but it also succeeded in crushing the traditional rural elites, the sects, and the thousands of armed groups of "bandits" that had been terrorizing the population.[70] The Chinese Communists established "New China" as a so-called "new democracy" that included private ownership of land, private enterprise, and market-based exchange. Steve Smith argues that the Chinese revolution was much more than a peasant movement led by the party, for the victory of the CCP in 1949 was based on a broader alliance of urban intellectuals, peasants, workers, "bandits," and even parts of the middle class.[71] In 1953, the CCP pushed forward a Socialist transformation of the economy, and the collectivization that began that year was implemented in a relatively peaceful way compared to that in the Soviet Union.[72] Instead of full socialization, the party enforced several sequential steps, from mutual aid groups to half-Socialist cooperatives, thence to Socialist cooperatives. In contrast to an often romanticized picture of Chinese collectivization in the past, however, today we know that many villages established the Socialist cooperatives right after the land reform, without going step by step.[73] In any event, compared to their Soviet counterpart, the CCP had much stronger roots in the countryside. In the spring of 1955, 170,000 party branches existed in 220,000 villages, with 4 million members.[74] In 1929 the CPSU had had only 171,600 party members who worked in agriculture. The population of China in the early 1950s was about 3.7 times higher than of the Soviet Union in the mid-1920s, but the number of party members in the countryside was about twenty-three times higher.[75]

While in China no mass deportations of peasants were carried out, political pressure and mass arrests were among the tactics used to enforce collectivization. Between 1953 and 1956, millions of peasants had the right to resign from the collectives *(tuishe)* if they were dissatisfied with the new forms of production. However, the Socialist Education Campaign of 1957 clamped down on this resistance, and from then on resigning was not an option.[76] In contrast to the Russian Communists,

the CCP experienced no civil war–type confrontation with the peasantry, but both sides demonstrated a certain naïveté: in 1959, when the shortages in the public dining halls began, many peasants could not believe the party capable of breaking its promise that nobody would starve to death in the New China. Nor did Mao expect the policies of the Great Leap to cause serious dissatisfaction and resistance in the countryside. Mao's attitude toward the peasants was ambivalent, oscillating between hopes for rural enthusiasm and disappointment caused by rural conservatism.[77] In 1955 and 1958, his outlook had moved toward enthusiasm about rural mass movements.

It would be too simple to describe the Bolsheviks as merely anti-peasant or the Chinese Communists as either just pro- or just anti-peasant. After the failure to mobilize the rural poor against the kulaks in 1919, Lenin again and again emphasized the necessity of an alliance between the workers and the poor and "middle" peasants.[78] In his last work, Lenin argued that socialism in the Soviet Union could succeed only if the party could win over the rural population for the cooperative movement.[79] At least in rhetoric, Stalin argued that the support of parts of the rural population, such as the poor and middle peasants, would be important.[80] Stalin hoped that the allowance of private plots and local markets after 1933 would improve relations with the peasantry after the disaster of the famine. However, it must be said that the development models of the Soviet Union and China were both based on the exploitation of the peasantry for industrialization. Many underdeveloped countries chose this model, but in the Soviet Union and China it became particularly problematic when a rapid decline in food availability threatened the livelihood of the rural population.

THE "TRIBUTE" OF THE PEASANTRY FOR INDUSTRIALIZATION

In the mid-1920s, the Soviet Communists were engaged in a relatively open debate about the optimal path to socialism. Yevgeni Preobrazhensky, for a brief time a member of the Politburo and one of the leading economists of the party, argued that the Soviet Union had to go through a process of "primitive Socialist accumulation" similar to Great Britain's "primitive capitalist accumulation," which laid the foundations for the industrial upswing. According to Karl Marx, the de-

struction of commonly owned land created a large, impoverished rural surplus population—meaning the rural unemployed—from which the proletariat for the factories could be recruited. Furthermore, the loss of entitlement to land and the destruction of rural handicraft or cottage industries separated large parts of the population from the means of production.[81] Preobrazhensky admitted quite frankly that the industrialization of the Soviet Union could be based only on the exploitation of the peasantry because a Socialist country could not conquer colonies.[82] An educated Marxist such as Preobrazhensky must have understood the violent implication of the term "primitive accumulation." In Marx's *Capital*, the chapter on "Primitive Accumulation" is the most horrifying in the entire book, and Marx claimed that capitalism would be built upon mountains of corpses. Other party leaders such as Bukharin were unwilling to agree with Preobrazhensky at that time. However, on July 9, 1928, Stalin admitted that peasants would have to pay a "tribute." Because the Soviet Union could not exploit colonies or finance its industrialization with foreign loans, the only sources of accumulation were the workers in industry and the peasants. He argued:

> The way matters stand with the peasantry in this respect is as follows: it not only pays the state the usual taxes, direct and indirect; it also *overpays* in the relatively high prices for manufactured goods—that is in the first place, and it is more or less *underpaid* in the prices for agricultural produce—that is in the second place. This is an additional tax levied on the peasantry for the sake of promoting industry, which caters for the whole country, the peasantry included. It is something in the nature of a "tribute," of a supertax, which we are compelled to levy for the time being in order to preserve and accelerate our present rate of industrial development, in order to ensure an industry for the whole country, in order to raise further the standard of life of the rural population and then to abolish altogether this additional tax, these "scissors" between town and country. It is an unpalatable business, there is no denying. But we should not be Bolsheviks if we slurred over it and closed our eyes to the fact that, unfortunately, our industry and our country cannot *at present* dispense with this additional tax on the peasantry.[83]

Stalin also predicted that the burden of the peasants would become lighter in the future and asserted that the industrialization of the country was for the peasants' own good.[84] However, the collectivization that followed in 1929 increased the tax burden of the peasants enormously

compared to the NEP, and Stalin admitted quite openly that the goal of the alliance between workers and peasants was not to preserve the classes, but "gradually to *remould* the peasantry, its mentality and its production, *along collectivist lines*, and thus to bring about the conditions for the abolition of classes."[85] Stalin held the belief that collectivized peasants would be much easier to control than millions of small family units.

In the PRC, no party leader in the 1950s made such an overt statement as Preobrazhensky's, to my knowledge. The Chinese Communists studied the Soviet grain policies, and Mao Zedong made statements in the mid-1950s that the policies of the Soviet Union under Stalin had harmed the development of agriculture excessively.[86] However, he also adopted Stalin's term, "tribute," for the extra contribution of the peasants.[87] As a matter of fact, in both countries, the radical development of heavy industry was based on the exploitation of the peasantry and low grain prices, which helped to finance the urban workforce. How much would be taken and how much would remain became questions of survival both for the peasantry and for the government, which needed resources to industrialize the country. The state monopoly on purchasing and sales and the collectivization of agriculture were the main tools used to extract the surplus and sometimes even more.

In 1928, the Soviet Union faced a serious procurement crisis because many peasants refused to sell grain at the fixed price. Stalin spoke of a grain deficit of 128 million *poods* (around 8 million tons) in the beginning of the year.[88] As a result of this crisis, the supply became tight in the cities, and the government had to introduce nationwide bread rationing in the winter of 1928–1929.[89] Stalin used the threat of urban hunger several times in order to justify the use of "extraordinary measures," including force and draconian laws, to collect grain. As an example, in July 1928, Stalin argued in a speech that without "extraordinary measures," the country "would have now had an extremely serious crisis throughout the national economy, hunger in the cities, hunger in the army."[90] In China, the same problem occurred in 1953, when urban rationing was established to deal with a supply crisis. Both parties decided as a solution to eliminate free markets and establish a state monopoly over the grain trade. Together with Socialist agricultural policies, this price monopoly caused serious conflicts between the state and the peasants in the Soviet Union in 1928–1930 and in China

between 1953 and 1957. With the introduction of the state monopoly all middlemen between state and villages were eliminated. The state was now able to set the purchase prices, which were much lower than the market prices. Peasants were highly unsatisfied with the price policy, but the state could feed the urban workforce and keep wages low. Fixed prices also protected the urban consumer from huge variations or speculation. In the Chinese case, scholars use the term "dual society" *(eryuan shehui)* to describe the existence of two different societies, with urban areas subsidized by the state and rural areas relying on their own resources and production.[91] The so-called dual social system had already been established by the early 1950s, but in 1955, a supply system involving ration cards was introduced in urban areas. The state council announced several regulations in 1953, 1955, 1956, and 1957 before establishing a strict household registration system *(hukou)* in 1958 in order to prevent the rural population from moving to cities in search of employment.[92] In 1955, the state also decided to divide its population into two separate groups, urban citizens and rural citizens. As a result, villagers became in practice second-class citizens, a status that continues to this day. They do not have the same rights as urban dwellers when it comes to the social security system, health insurance, food supply, marriage, freedom of movement, planned parenthood, education, or military service.[93] In 2004, the Central Committee of the CCP used the term "dual society" in an important document and admitted that the economic development of the country had been based on the transfer of rural resources to the urban society for decades. The decision addressed the problem of urban privileges openly.[94]

In contrast to industrialization in Western Europe, urban workers in the Soviet Union and China, at least the permanent workforce in the state enterprises, were better protected against hardships than the rural population. The regimes also justified this bias with the slogan of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." However, the state also constantly reminded the urban population not to waste food and urged it to curb its consumption. Due to the primacy given to heavy industrial development, a regime of saving was enforced for the whole population.

In the heyday of radicalism during the Russian Civil War (1919–1920) and early collectivization in 1929, Bolshevik leaders considered food rationing a progressive Socialist or even Communist element of the economy.[95] However, the periods of orthodoxy did not last long.

Food was rationed only in times of extraordinary hardship such as the Civil War and its aftermath, from the grain crisis of 1929 until 1935, and then from World War II until the famine of 1946. In 1935 and 1947, the Soviet press celebrated the abolition of food rationing as a sign of the economic recovery and normalization of the country.[96] In contrast to the Soviet Union, the rationing of food and important consumer goods in China was never abolished from the mid-1950s until the early 1980s. This was a clear sign that the country remained a "war communist"–shortage economy during the entire Mao period.

It must be noted that Soviet agriculture was far more developed in the 1920s than was China's in the 1950s. The figures relating to Soviet grain output in the early 1930s are still very controversial because of the unreliability of Soviet statistics during the crisis. R. W. Davies and Stephen Wheatcroft estimate the harvest of 1930 at 73–77 million tons, that of 1931 at 57–65 million tons, that of 1932 at 55–60 million tons, and that of 1933 at 70–77 million tons.[97] Mark Tauger argues that the harvest of 1932 may have been well below 50 million tons.[98] In any event, it is clear that there was a serious decline in available food. However, the decline in production was smaller than in the period from World War I to the end of the Civil War in 1921. According to official statistics published in the reform era, China produced 200 million tons of grain in 1958, 170 million tons in 1959, 143.5 million tons in 1960, and 147.5 million tons in 1961.[99] These figures represent a decline in agricultural production of over 30 percent between 1958 and 1960. Unlike in the case of the Soviet famine of 1931–1933, production declined rapidly in two years and full recovery came only in 1965. People suffered and starved to death for three long years, four in Sichuan Province. In the "years of hunger" the Soviet Union experienced only two bad harvests, in 1931 and 1932, and recovered faster.

Some Chinese scholars have argued that the collectivization of agriculture was not motivated only by Communist ideology, but also by the wish of the state to extract more grain from the countryside.[100] Despite the rapid decrease in production, the state collected more grain in the countryside than before. In the Soviet Union, total grain collection increased sharply from 10.8 million tons in 1928 to 22.1 million tons in 1929 (the first year of collectivization) to 22.6 million tons in 1933. Even in the terrible famine year of 1932, the state was still able to collect 18.5 million tons.[101] In China, the collectivization of agriculture

Table 1.1. Grain Production and Purchase in China, 1952–1965 (in tons)

Year	Production	Purchase (total)	Purchase (net)	Percent of Production (total)	Percent of Production (net)
1952	163,900,000	33,270,000	28,190,000	20.3	17.2
1953	166,850,000	47,460,000	35,885,000	28.4	21.5
1954	169,500,000	51,810,000	31,585,000	30.6	18.6
1955	183,950,000	50,745,000	36,175,000	27.6	19.7
1956	192,750,000	45,440,000	28,700,000	23.6	14.9
1957	195,050,000	48,040,000	33,870,000	24.6	17.4
1958	200,000,000	58,760,000	41,725,000	29.4	20.9
1959	170,000,000	67,405,000	47,565,000	39.7	28.0
1960	143,500,000	51,050,000	30,895,000	35.6	21.5
1961	147,500,000	40,470,000	25,805,000	27.4	17.5
1962	160,000,000	38,145,000	25,720,000	23.8	16.1
1963	170,000,000	43,965,000	28,920,000	25.9	17.0
1964	187,500,000	47,425,000	31,845,000	25.3	17.0
1965	194,550,000	48,685,000	33,595,000	25.0	17.3

Source: Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu jihuasi, ed., *Zhongguo nongcun jingji tongji daquan 1949–1986* [A Complete Collection of Statistics Regarding the Rural Economy of China] (Beijing: Nongye chubanshe, 1989), 410–411.

(1953–1956) showed mixed results regarding the extraction of the surplus. The total purchase of grain rose from 33.2 million tons in 1952 to 51.8 million tons in 1954 (see table 1.1). Despite the collectivization of agriculture and the increase in production, grain procurement decreased between 1955 and 1956. In the first two years of the Great Leap Forward and the founding of the commune, the state was able to take more grain from the countryside. In 1958, the state purchased 58.7 million (total) tons, compared to 48 million tons (total) in 1957. In the worst year of the famine, in 1960, the government was still able to collect 51 million tons (net).[102] The famine years of 1959 and 1960 saw the highest procurement rates in the period from 1952 to 1979. While in the Soviet Union the state was able to double the collection of grain in the first years of collectivization (between 1928 and 1933), in China the establishment of the People's Commune brought only temporary rapid increases in procurement, and after the famine the government had to acknowledge the limits of exploiting the peasants. In my view,

the procurement rates can be seen as measures of the balance of power between the state and the peasants. During the famines, procurement reached deadly levels for the rural population, which was not entitled to food rations from the state.

FAMINE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE

While the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 and the Chinese famine of 1959–1961 were both related to the radical collectivization of agriculture, it would be simplistic to blame the famines on collectivized agriculture in general. Even with collectivized agriculture, the Soviet Union after 1948 and China after 1962 experienced no famine. Nor did more highly developed Socialist countries such as the German Democratic Republic (GDR) or the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR). As a matter of fact, shortages of particular consumer goods were a serious problem in all Socialist economies. In the Soviet and Chinese cases, the famines were related to very radical versions of Socialist agriculture and to policies of full socialization. The very radical forms of implementation in the Soviet Union in 1929 and China in 1958 contributed to the decline of production and contributed to organizational chaos.[103] The Russian anarchist thinker Pyotr Alexeyevich Kropotkin (1842–1921) once argued that past revolutions had failed precisely because they did not succeed in feeding the populace in times of radical change. Kropotkin gave as examples the experience of the Jacobins during the French Revolution of 1793 and the Paris Commune of 1871.[104] In both instances, it was very difficult for the urban revolutionaries to organize grain supplies from the countryside. Kropotkin proposed that in future cases, revolutionaries should confiscate urban food stocks and immediately distribute them to the populace, in addition to establishing modern farms in suburban areas in order to avoid total dependence on the peasantry. Against the historical background of several famines under socialism, Kropotkin's concern that a radical transformation of ownership structures could result in supply crises seems amply justified.

In both countries, the first harvest in the year of the establishment of the kolkhoz in 1930 and the People's Communes in 1958 was good.[105] However, by the end of 1930 only 24.2 percent of peasant households had been collectivized in the USSR and 30.6 percent in the Ukrainian

Soviet Republic.[106] In China, the establishment of the People's Communes began in August 1958 and was 99.1 percent completed in November.[107] The governments linked the good harvests to collectivization and did so with tragic consequences, for unrealistic plans and expectations contributed to the disasters of the following years.

The process of collectivization created a relatively homogenous peasantry. The state was still very dependent on the work performance of the rural population. Soviet leaders argued repeatedly that the kolkhozes could develop into an institution set against the state.[108] The media of both countries often complained about idling, slow-down strikes, and theft. During the famines, theft became necessary to survival and later persisted as a cultural habit in the Socialist system.[109] The state reacted with repression. Stalin personally drafted a new law on August 7, 1932, according to which thieves of Socialist property, including grain stocks, could be executed. In 1932–1933, two hundred thousand people were sent to labor camps and eleven thousand were executed under this new law.[110] In China, peasants went into the field to "eat green" *(chi qing)*—that is, to eat unripe grain or maize before the state could take the harvest.[111] In China, no draconian legislation was passed to punish the theft of food, but local cadres often availed themselves of terror in the form of beatings and torture to prevent theft.[112]

In 1932 in the Soviet Union and in late 1959 in China, it became increasingly difficult to extract more grain from the countryside to feed the cities and meet export quotas. Facing a real threat that the famines could turn into a political crisis, both governments decided to introduce new policies to end them. The CPSU in 1933–1934 and the CCP in 1961–1962 gave permission for private plots and local markets and lowered procurement rates for the peasants. In effect, black markets and illegal small production were legalized. As a result of these new policies, hybrid ownership structures were established within the Socialist collectives.

In the Soviet Union, black markets and small production rapidly increased during World War II.[113] The government did not crack down on these activities because the official rations were often not enough to survive on. Even the diet of urban workers relied on rural markets. The radical transformation of ownership structures, later followed by more moderate policies, played an important role in the development of the Soviet and Chinese Great Leap famines. However, not all famines

under state socialism were related to the transformation of ownership structures; for example, collectivization played no role in the Russian Civil War famine of 1919–1921. After World War II, the Soviet government collectivized agriculture in newly occupied territories such as West Ukraine and Moldavia; nonetheless, scholars consider the major causes of the famine to have been the decrease in production caused by drought, the high procurement rates, and the abolition of urban rations and price controls. It should be noted, however, that the number of deaths in these post–World War II famines was much lower than in the two Great Leap famines in China and the Soviet Union.

STRUCTURAL CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE STATE AND PEASANTS AND THE MANIPULATION OF DATA

Under the system of collective agriculture and the grain monopoly of the state, the peasants soon learned that they would go hungry unless they resorted to various survival stratagems and engaged in acts of "resistance." (In chapter 3, this term will be evaluated in more detail.) In centralized planned economies the reliability of statistics is extraordinarily important because the state decides not only about production, but also about levels of consumption. Despite the best official intentions to create a scientific system of statistics, the problem of data manipulation could never be solved entirely. In this connection the structural conflict between the state and the peasantry played an important role, compounding the problem with the political pressure put on local cadres to report successes.

Facing high procurement rates and low prices for grain, peasants had an interest in underreporting production and land in order to keep more food for themselves. The state could counter this strategy, and often did so, by overestimating the production figures reported by the lower ranks of command. For example, the Italian vice-consul, stationed in Kharkov in 1932, wondered how the government could make plans based on the estimate that one hen would lay one egg every day. Cadres replied that one must logically suppose that for every reported hen, two other hens went unreported.[114] Sheila Fitzpatrick writes the following of Russia in the 1930s: "When the government set procurement quotas, the guesswork started with the size of the future harvest. But that was only the beginning. Once the year's quotas were announced,

the standard response—starting with the peasants at kolkhoz level, but going upwards through the administrative hierarchy from rural soviet to raion to oblast and even republic—was an attempt to haggle. Each kolkhoz, raion, and oblast was likely to try to show that for a series of objective reasons, its particular quota was impossible to meet. . . . Peasants habitually exaggerated local difficulties and underestimated the crop."[115] Fitzpatrick compares this behavior with traditional taxation rituals in which the tax collector was told a standard tale: "The crops were blighted, the animals were stricken with disease, the men were absent on otkhod, fires had destroyed barns and izbas, and so on."[116] The official knew that this was a standard story; however, he had to determine whether some of it was true and how much the village could really afford to pay. In the PRC after the introduction of the state monopoly for the purchase and sale of grain in 1953 *(tonggou tongxiao)*, the strategies of "concealing production and private distribution" *(manchan sifen)* became widespread in many provinces.[117] The famines can also be considered a result of the inability and unwillingness of the state to guess the truth within the narrative of difficulties and hunger told by the peasants. D'Ann Penner considers the Soviet famine of 1932–1933 not so much an economic crisis as a political crisis in villager-party relations with serious economic ramifications.[118] She argues that peasants reacted with an "Italian strike"—Stalin's term for a slowdown in response to state policies. As a result, the state resorted to stern measures to crack down on resistance, further exacerbating the problems.

The ambitious Socialist government mobilized for an industrialization effort, one of the realities setting it apart from traditional states. During the Great Leaps, the systems of statistics were highly politicized and therefore even more unreliable than usual. Wheatcroft and Davies have shown for the Soviet case that in the late 1920s Stalin purged professional statisticians in the planning bureaucracies in the name of the Socialist offensive.[119] The new bureaucratic structures were chaotic, with responsibilities often unclear. As for the Chinese case, it is commonly understood in Western and Chinese research that the so-called "wind of exaggeration" *(fukuafeng)* in the autumn of 1958 played an important role in the development of the famine.[120] Villages competed to produce record harvests that were in most cases falsified—a sheer manipulation of statistics. As noted, overreporting was not in the

interest of peasants because it meant that the state would raise the procurement rates and peasants would have less to eat. However, during the high tide of the Great Leap, local cadres felt overwhelming pressure from county and provincial governments to report achievements, and they feared punitive repercussions if they failed to make strong reports. During the winter of 1958 and the spring of 1959, Mao Zedong realized that many record harvests were mere manipulations, and he called for more honest reports.[121] However, the clash between Mao and the minister of defense, Peng Dehuai, at the Lushan Conference of the central committee in the summer of 1959 led to a renewed politicization of statistics, and during the famine the system of statistics actually collapsed altogether. The campaign against Peng and "right-wing opportunism" created fear among the cadres to report negative developments. Leaders of the central government constantly complained about being wrongly informed, but at the same time Stalin and Mao were unwilling to send out clear signals that cadres reporting the truth about starvation would not be punished.

THE ROLE OF EXPORTS

During the famines both the Soviet and the Chinese governments exported grain, a fact that is often considered proof of the cruelty of Socialist regimes and the man-made character of the famines. In truth, many lives could have been saved if the governments had decided to import food and feed the hungry, yet it remains a controversial question whether the exports had a significant impact on the famine. The party leadership believed that food exports were vital for industrial development and used them to finance imports of modern industrial technology and machinery. In the Soviet case, Germany was an important supplier, while the PRC imported modern technology from the Socialist camp. Already during the grain crisis of 1928, the Soviet leadership had debated whether or not grain should be imported. Bukharin hoped imports would limit the conflicts between the state and the peasantry over grain procurement; in contrast to the moderate faction, Stalin was concerned that the use of foreign exchange for buying grain would seriously harm the industrial buildup of the country. In the early 1930s, falling grain prices turned the terms of trade against the Soviet Union. Its potential ability to repay debts suffered, and Western bankers, and

especially the German government, were concerned that Soviet creditworthiness might be destroyed completely.[122]

According to Davies and Wheatcroft, the Soviet government exported 4.8 million tons of grain in 1931–1932.[123] This quantity was much greater than in the mid-1920s but far lower than the 10 million tons the Russian empire had exported before World War I.[124] The following year, 1932–1933, the exports were reduced to 1.8 million tons.[125] Exports as a percentage of the harvest are hard to estimate because, as noted, the figures for the harvest are still highly controversial. Davies and Wheatcroft have estimated figures for the harvests of 1930–1933 (quoted above).[126] Even if we choose the higher estimates for that period, exports were only a small percentage of the harvest. Davies and Wheatcroft's figure of 4.8 million tons of exports in 1931 was calculated based on the relatively good harvest of 1930, which produced 73–77 million tons. The Soviet government was not willing to tell its trade partners in 1931 that contracts could not be fulfilled because of the famine; saving face in the international arena was considered more important.

In the PRC, the government succeeded in exporting grain between 1950 and 1958 and yet avoided a nationwide deadly famine, despite the exports. From the early 1950s, the party leaders argued that the import of grain under the GMD government was to blame for constraining the industrialization of China.[127] In the eyes of the leaders of the CCP, food imports were a luxury that the country could not afford. With a faster speed of industrialization, exports had to increase as well. In several decisions, the central government made it clear that the fulfillment of export quotas was more important than food consumption. For example, on March 16, 1959, the State Council instructed that no pigs should be slaughtered for local private consumption in the countryside for three months and people in the cities should eat less in order to meet the quotas for the export of frozen meat.[128] The most important element of Chinese nutrition at that time was grain. The net quantity of exported grain rose from 1.88 million tons in 1957 to 3.25 million tons in 1958. China actually exported 4.74 million tons in 1959, the first year of famine, and 1 million tons during the peak of the catastrophe in 1960.[129] As in the Soviet Union, exports were only a small percentage of the harvest: 2.47 percent in 1959 and 1.88 percent in 1960.[130] Even without exporting any grain, the Chinese population would have been

in serious trouble with the huge decline in agricultural production and food availability. Nonetheless, there is only partial truth in the popular nationalist myth in contemporary China that Chinese citizens starved because all the food was exported to the Soviet Union. The drastic decline in agricultural production was caused by other factors, such as the policies of the Great Leap Forward. Against the background of the rising Sino-Soviet conflict, Mao and his comrades wanted to save face; they were unwilling to acknowledge the failure of the Great Leap and ask the Soviet Union for a postponement of debt repayment. Only in late 1960 did the leadership realize that a change in the policies was unavoidable. Chen Yun, one of the leading planners of the time, argued that the burden of the peasants could be eased only if the urban population were to be fed with imports, and he considered imports necessary for the recovery of agriculture and for reactivating the interest of the peasants in producing more.[131]

In contrast to Mao, Stalin lowered grain exports only in the famine years of 1932 and 1933, but in peacetime he was never willing to import grain to improve the nutrition of the populace. Both regimes focused on the development of heavy industry and paid less attention to the well-being of the rural population, and exports were also important in convincing foreign governments and supporters that no famine was taking place. An important difference between China and the Soviet Union is that under Stalin the system of exploiting the peasants and financing modernization with grain exports remained intact after the famine, while China had to import grain after 1962 and could not continue with the development strategy of the 1950s. In this regard, Stalin was more successful than Mao, and the fact that the Soviet leader achieved victory over Nazi Germany was also used to justify the hardship of the 1930s.

It is very difficult to estimate how many people could have been saved with the grain that was exported because grain was often stolen or badly stored. We can engage in a thought experiment to estimate the chances of survival if the Soviet and Chinese governments had stopped the exports and optimally disbursed the grain based on perfect information about where relief was needed. For this experiment, the amount of grain that is necessary for survival should be defined. People can also live on eggs, meat, vegetables, and sugar without eating any grain, but for Russian and Chinese peasants, as mentioned above, grain provided most of the calories, so it is most relevant to make an estimate based

on a diet of grain, which was also the most important product in the rationing system. Furthermore, statistics for other food products were less complete and reliable, in particular in the Chinese case. Chinese peasants were accustomed to living on a much lower calorie intake than Russian peasants, and urban workers too received higher rations in the Soviet Union than in China. For example, workers in Moscow and Leningrad in 1929–1930 were entitled to 800 grams of bread and 100–200 grams of meat per day plus monthly rations of groats, meat, butter, and herring.[132] In China, according to the nationwide urban rationing schedule that was introduced in 1955, a worker who performed heavy labor in wheat-consuming areas would receive an average ration of between 720 and 900 grams of processed grain per day—the two highest ration categories.[133] College students and workers who performed light physical labor received an average of around 570 grams per day. While the Soviet rations of 1929–1930 already reflected an urban supply crisis, the Chinese rations were set for "normal" times. We must consider not only the level of nutrition during the famines, but also the decline in consumption compared to previous years. I believe that we should define higher rations standards for the Soviet Union than for China for purposes of the estimate. For the Soviet Union, I would use 600 grams of processed grain per person per day as a minimum ration for survival. Such an amount would be about 2,100 calories in the case of wheat flour. The 500 grams of processed grain per person per day (182.5 kg per year)—around 1,750 calories per day—recommended by Chinese party leaders as a minimum ration for peasants would be considered famine conditions in richer countries. However, we can take 500 grams of processed grain as a bottom line for survival in the Chinese case. For the Soviet Union, the following result emerges: With the 1.8 million tons of grain that were exported in 1932–1933 over 8.2 million people could have been fed a daily ration of 600 grams for a year. If we assume that 6–7 million died in the famine, then even more people than the victims of the famine could have been fed. The Soviet government planned to export 6.2 million tons from the 1932 harvest but scaled back the plan because of the famine.[134]

In the Chinese case, according to Yang Dali, the 1 million tons of grain exported in 1960 would have been enough to save the lives of 4 million people.[135] Yang does not specify on what daily ration he bases his estimate, but it seems that he came to this conclusion based on a 250-kg ration per person per year (or 680 grams per day), which is

more than the recommended quantity. If we use 500 grams for the estimate, over 5.4 million people could have been saved for a year. There is no doubt that most of those who starved died in 1960, and therefore the grain for the exports could have saved only a small proportion of them. The 1958 harvest was relatively good, and the government based the plans for exports on it. I would consider the large exports in 1959 a serious mistake on the part of the government but the 1960 exports as a crime. However, if we assume that there should have been no exports in 1959 either, we arrive at the following estimate: 4.74 million tons would have been enough to feed 25.9 million people for a year based on a 500-gram daily ration. If we assume that 40 million people died during the famine, then the lives of over 31.5 million people could have been saved with the grain from the 1959 and 1960 exports.

Six hundred grams of daily grain for the Soviet case and 500 grams for the Chinese one are relatively generous estimates because these were rations for working adults, but of course many children and old people also died during the famine. As noted, this is only a thought experiment, because rationing systems that work without loss, waste, theft, or misinformation do not exist. The central government in China was in charge of the grain supply only for Beijing, Tianjin, and Liaoning (see chapter 4 for details). The peasants were not included in the rationing system. It can be assumed that some loss of grain would have occurred on the way to the villages due to the corruption of local cadres, bad transportation conditions, and the mismanagement of storage and use in the public dining halls. However, it would have been possible to feed parts of the urban population with the grain that was exported and therefore to reduce the burden of the starving peasantry.

In sum, in the Soviet case, the grain that was exported in 1932–1933 would have been sufficient to prevent the deaths of all 6–7 million people. In the Chinese case, millions of lives could have been saved if the exports of 1959 and 1960 had been used to feed hungry peasants, but the amount was far too small to avoid the starvation death of other millions.

WERE THE FAMINES DELIBERATE MASS MURDER?

The conflicts between the state and the peasants are obvious, but did the Soviet and Chinese governments use the famines to punish the

rural population via deliberate mass murder or to force them into the collective order? Although I have decided not to focus on this question, I should nevertheless explain how I see it in the context of the debates within Soviet and Chinese studies and my own findings.

Stalin and Mao failed to acknowledge the famines in public during their lifetimes, as they continued grain exports and rejected foreign aid. Much has been written on their leadership. China scholars from the West have debated the role of Mao in the development of the early Great Leap Forward, but only one article in English has been published concerning Mao's actions during the peak of the famine in 1960.[136] Bernstein argues that Mao himself addressed the problem of peasants' livelihoods in the first half of 1959. However, after the clash with Peng Dehuai at the Lushan Conference in the summer of that year, he promoted a new radicalization of the Great Leap. He should have known that it would cause mass deaths. The campaign against "right-wing opportunists" *(youqing jihuizhuyi fenzi)* silenced the critics, and other government officials mainly provided Mao with "good news." Starting in the spring of 1960, Mao several times expressed concern about the abnormal numbers of deaths, but he did not apply pressure to stop the famine. According to Bernstein, Mao's responsibility for the famine lies in his willful ignorance of the lessons he had already learned in early 1959.[137] Bernstein focuses on Mao's reactions to reports of rural famine. As I will show in chapter 4, Mao was involved in the relief effort in 1960 to prevent the spread of the rural famine into urban areas. The urban basis of the supply system is also an important factor in explaining the deaths in the countryside. Mao was more concerned about a potential urban famine than about a real rural one. When the food supply to the cities was endangered because it was impossible to extract enough grain from the countryside, Mao was willing to make radical policy changes. However, it must be stressed that, unlike the ideal Confucian emperor, Mao approved the changes to stop mass starvation in the countryside much too late, and his efforts to help the peasants survive the famine between the summer of 1959 and the autumn of 1960 were abysmally insufficient.

So far no serious scholar has claimed that the famine was deliberately organized by the Chinese government. It occurred against all the wishes and plans of the regime in 1959. However, Dikötter would label the famine the greatest mass killing in human history, one that cost

the lives of 45 million people at a minimum. He is right that little was known in the past about the degree of terror or the extent of executions during the Great Leap Forward. He has estimated that 2.5 million people were beaten to death and that 1–3 million committed suicide.[138] Cormac Ó Gráda has criticized Dikötter's methodology and considers the figure of 45 million to be speculation.[139] Despite Dikötter's access to eleven provincial archives, he found, to my mind, little evidence that Mao acknowledged that peasants died by the millions for the sake of the Great Leap, let alone that he ordered such deaths. Dikötter's main argument is that Mao requested in a speech on March 25, 1959 (at the Shanghai Conference), that grain procurements be increased to one-third of the harvest.[140] This document is Dikötter's "smoking gun." Zhou Xun, Dikötter's long-time collaborator, argues in the same direction. In her documentary history of the famine, she published excerpts of Mao's speech. It would prove that Mao gave the order to increase the procurement rates of grain knowing of the catastrophic events in the countryside.[141] Mao said: "As long as the amount of grain being procured does not go above a third [of grain produced], peasants will not rebel." Furthermore, he claimed: "When there is not enough to eat, people starve to death. It is better to let half of the people die so that the other half can eat their fill."[142] However, reading the document, one gets the impression that Li Xiannian reported that several places were not able to meet the goals and that Mao pushed to fulfill the existing procurement quotas. About one-third of the harvest was usually procured by the state in the 1950s in good years, but Mao set this goal under famine conditions that some parts of the country were already experiencing. According to the official statistics, the net procurement rate of grain rose to 28 percent in 1959.[143] This rate was the highest in the period between 1952 and 1979 (see tables 1.1 and E.1 for details). Various scholars consider the high procurement rates as an important reason for the famine. Furthermore, Mao praised the "Henan method" for collecting grain in the speech mentioned above. During that time, the eastern part of Henan Province was suffering from famine (Yudong Shijian—the Yudong Incident), yet the radical provincial leader Wu Zhipu had approved anti-hording campaigns against the peasants.[144] The document is a clear sign of Mao's ruthlessness.

However, both the Austrian-based scholar Warren Sun and Anthony Garnaut accuse Dikötter of falsifying history by taking Mao's state-

ment ("It is better to let half of the people die so that the other half can eat their fill") out of context. In Sun and Garnaut's interpretation, Mao used this expression to argue for the downsizing of industrial projects by half because they could no longer be financed. So we should not take Mao's statement as an order to murder via starvation.[145]

Mao had made cynical remarks before. For example, in September 1958, he had said that if the imperial powers attacked with atomic weapons, he would not be afraid, even if half of the population died.[146] Could Mao seriously have imagined in March 1959 that half of the population of China—about 300 million people—would starve to death? In order to evaluate in a systematic way when and how much Mao knew about the extent of famine between 1958 and 1962, we would need access to the Central Party Archives in Beijing. It remains to be seen whether documentary evidence can be found that proves that Mao considered the deaths of millions a necessary sacrifice for the Great Leap or gave direct orders to kill peasants via starvation.

Soviet scholars have much better access to sources, and many previously top-secret documents from Politburo meetings are available. However, the question of whether Stalin deliberately used the famine to kill millions of peasants is still controversial. Referring to the results of the 1931 harvest, Stalin claimed in June 1932 that in Ukraine as a result of the poor organization of the collectives, "a number of districts with good harvests were in a state of ruin and famine."[147] Soon after this admission, the use of the word "famine" became taboo. In February 1933, Stalin even publicly declared the following at an All-Union Congress of Collective Farm Workers: "At all events, compared with the difficulties which the workers experienced 10–15 years ago, your present difficulties, comrade collective farmers, seem mere child's play."[148] Given that millions were still starving, this strikes one as a very cruel remark.

Apart from this cynical attitude, can it be proved that Stalin purposely used the famine to kill millions? The narrative that Stalin organized the famine to commit genocide against Ukrainians will be evaluated in more detail in chapter 7. Even some scholars who do not support the genocide thesis believe that the Soviet government used the famine to punish the peasantry for resisting collectivization and grain procurement. In my view, the most interesting academic debate on this issue has taken place among Michael Ellman, Davies/Wheatcroft, and

Hiroaki Kuromiya. Ellman argues that Stalin did not organize the famine but that it was caused by the two bad harvests in 1931 and 1932. However, Ellman believes that the Soviet government did use hunger to kill some peasants who were considered "counter-revolutionaries" and "idlers."[149] After plans for the mass deportation of peasants were scaled down, the Soviet government used starvation as a cheap alternative according to Ellman. Furthermore, the two bad harvests would not necessarily have had to result in almost 6 million deaths. Ellman argues that the team around Stalin was guilty in 1930–1935 of "crimes against humanity" because unlike during the famines in 1891, 1921–1922, 1941–1945, and 1946–1947, during this famine the Soviet leadership rejected foreign aid. The government exported grain and prevented peasants in Ukraine and the North Caucasus from fleeing the famine areas, a policy that caused the deaths of many.[150] Ellman admits that so far no document has been found in which Stalin explicitly ordered starvation, but such a conclusion would be circumstantially justified in an analysis of Stalin's general perception of the peasantry and the actions of the government during the famine.[151] Davies and Wheatcroft, who are the most prominent opponents of the genocide or deliberate starvation thesis, believe that the famine was a result of mistaken policies; the "revolution from above," which was aimed at industrializing a peasant country at breakneck speed; and circumstances of geography and bad weather. The crisis broke out unexpectedly and contrary to the regime's wishes.[152] In their debate with Ellman, Davies and Wheatcroft acknowledge that Stalin's policies toward the peasants were brutal and ruthless, but they believe there to be no serious ground for Ellman's view that he pursued a conscious policy of starvation during the famine.[153] There is no doubt that grain was in short supply in the summer of 1932, when the death rates in towns rose sharply. When the scale of famine became more obvious to the leaders, the government reduced grain collection plans several times in 1932 and early 1933, especially for Ukraine and the North Caucasus. What is more, between February and July 1933, the Politburo made no fewer than thirty-five top-secret decisions to provide small amounts of food to the countryside, primarily to these two regions.[154] These decisions are a very strong argument against the thesis of organized mass murder. However, it is striking that the decisions were kept secret. The government might have worried

that more peasants would make demands if word of relief measures became widespread.

Davies, Wheatcroft, and Tauger had argued that the Soviet government controlled only 1.14 million tons of grain reserves in July 1933, not 4.5 million tons, as Robert Conquest assumed.[155] Such an amount would not have been enough to prevent a famine. The Soviet government lowered, but continued, grain exports during the famine. Davies and Wheatcroft see several foreign exchange crises and Stalin's unwillingness to admit the failure of his polices as the reason for the continuation of the exports: "He was more concerned with the fate of industrialization than with the lives of the peasants. However, we found no evidence, either direct or indirect, that Stalin sought deliberately to starve the peasants. The top-secret decisions of the Politburo, endorsed by Stalin, never hint at a policy of deliberate starvation."[156] The plan for deportations was abandoned because regional authorities were unwilling to take such large numbers of people according to Davies and Wheatcroft. Kuromiya takes a position in between Ellman and Davies/Wheatcroft. If Stalin had deliberately intended to kill millions of peasants, it seems likely that some evidence or hints of his intention would have surfaced in some form along the chain of command from the Kremlin to the villages. Only a few, if any, such hints have thus far been uncovered.[157] Based on current knowledge, one cannot come to the conclusion that Stalin intended to kill millions of people through famine. However, it does indeed seem likely that he used famine "on a limited scale as political terror."[158]

Stalin and Mao considered terror and mass executions as necessary tools of revolutionary transformation. However, this general fact is not evidence that they deliberately used the famines as weapons to kill millions of peasants. Radical collectivization produced different results than the leaders had hoped for. The massive decline in food availability also has to be taken into account in both countries. At least in China, peasants in many regions lived close to the margins even before the famine broke out. The governments considered food exports as necessary for industrialization in a hostile environment. The speed of industrialization and urbanization created pressures that the food supply system was unable to bear. The Soviet and Chinese governments continued the policy of food exports for too long and rebalanced the

relations between industry and agriculture, and between urban and rural society, much too late. For these failings, Stalin and Mao can indeed be held responsible for the death of millions of peasants. However, it remains to be seen whether the two leaders deliberately intended to bring about so many deaths.

The late Russian and Chinese empires were frequently hit by food shortages and famine. Millions starved to death after the founding of the Chinese Republic in 1912. We have to take these historical circumstances into account in order to understand the famines under the new revolutionary regimes. Many peasants in both countries experienced famines and hunger several times in their lifetimes. As a result, the promise to end hunger contributed to mass support for the revolutions and the breakdown of the old order. However, the Socialist governments caused famines with an even higher death toll than that in the prerevolutionary states.

It makes sense to compare the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 with the Chinese famine of 1959–1961 because they share many characteristics related to the Great Leaps, including programs for rapid industrialization and the radical transformation of social structures in urban and rural society against a background of utopian visions. The model of development during the Chinese Great Leap is closest to the "revolutionary Stalinism" of the Soviet Union between 1928 and 1931. After the New China was established in 1949, the CCP had much stronger roots in the countryside than the CPSU had had in the early 1930s. The large majority of kolkhozes did not even have a party unit. However, both regimes depended on the extraction of resources from the countryside for industrialization, and a "dual society" was created in which the urban population was entitled to welfare and food from the state while the rural population was dependent on its own production efforts. Thus the peasants were more vulnerable in the case of famine than urban dwellers. The establishment of the kolkhozes in 1929 and the People's Communes in 1958 allowed the state to collect more grain from the countryside than ever before. Despite a rapid decrease of agricultural production and food availability, the quotas for grain procurement remained extraordinarily high. The exchange of food exports for imported industrial equipment was crucial for industrialization. The Soviet and Chinese governments lowered the grain exports during the

famine but did not stop them. In a thought experiment, I estimated that over 8 million adults could have been fed based on a 600-gram daily ration for a year with the Soviet exports of 1932–1933. In China, the grain exports of 1960 could have saved 5.4 million but still would not have been enough to prevent the death of further millions. Even though these estimates are based on the admittedly problematic assumption of perfect distribution, they clearly demonstrate that the exports were an important contributing factor that must be considered in understanding the famines.

Both Great Leap famines can also be understood against the background of conflict between the state and the peasantry and a deadly escalation of the struggle over agricultural surpluses. Because of low grain prices, peasants had an interest in keeping as much as possible in the villages and in underreporting production, and the state was highly skeptical regarding complaints about hunger from the countryside. To counter the manipulation of data from below, the governments used statistical methods that estimated the harvest as greater than it actually was. Together with unrealistic expectations arising after a good harvest, the conflict between the villages and the state contributed to the unreliability of statistics and information. Kropotkin's concern that a radical social transformation of the ownership structures could cause hunger proved justified. Organizational chaos increased, and the early radical versions of the new structures of collective agriculture, the kolkhozes and the People's Communes, could not guarantee the livelihood of the rural population. In contrast to the industrialization in Western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the remaining population in the countryside was more severely affected than the new urban proletariat by poverty and desperation. Mao and Stalin were responsible for the deaths of millions of peasants because they enforced policy changes and relief measures much too late. However, there is no documentary evidence at present that the leaders gave orders to starve millions. Not only did the state collect too much grain because of its bias against the peasantry, but the rapid increase in the urban population also created extreme pressure on the supply system, as will be shown in the next chapter.

2 Protecting the Cities, Fighting for Survival of the Regime

THE PEASANTS AND THE STATE are not the only factors central to an understanding of how the famines developed. The supply systems that existed in the Soviet Union and China had a strong urban bias from their earliest beginnings. However, not all urban citizens and cities enjoyed the same privileges, and there was a geographic hierarchy. This chapter will show, first, how and why the Chinese and Soviet governments protected the important industrial and administrative cities during the famines. It will explain why the food in some cities was provided by the central government while other cities had to get grain from the countryside on their own. Second, in both countries, internal passports were established to stop rural-urban migration, but I will show enforcement of this policy was not effective during the famines, as the urban population continued to increase disproportionately and put ever greater pressure on the supply system. Third, the supreme leaders considered the famines a challenge to the very survival of their regimes. It will be shown that their experience during the civil wars, coupled with an external war threat, contributed to their decisions to save the urban population from mass starvation.

GEOGRAPHIC HIERARCHIES OF HUNGER

During the famine there was a considerable inequality of suffering, and not every social group or region endured the same privations. De-

spite the much stronger roots of the CCP in the villages, the Soviet and Chinese party-states acted similarly during the famines, protecting the major cities while mass starvation took place predominantly in the countryside. Important cities were fed at the expense of the countryside and the less important towns. In China, the grain supply of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Liaoning was guaranteed by the central government (chapter 4 gives a more detailed discussion of how this preferential status operated). In the Soviet Union, the government introduced the rationing of bread in urban centers as a result of the grain crisis in late 1928. In 1930, the government established a list of cities—including Moscow, Leningrad, Kharkov, Dnepropetrosvk, and cities in the Donbas region—that received supplies through the mechanism for centralized grain collection. Another list named eighty cities that would receive grain supplies from the centralized resources but whose supplies also would have to be supplemented with local grain collections. The remaining cities and towns were forced to rely entirely on local resources.[1] These lists place stark emphasis on the geographic hierarchies of hunger. In the Soviet Union, the urban population entitled to rations grew from 30.4 million to 36.7 million in the course of 1931 and to 38 million by the beginning of 1932.[2] This rapid increase in the number of urban dwellers created overwhelming pressure for the state to collect grain in the countryside, and the cruelty of Stalin and his inner circle is not sufficient to explain the harsh policies of grain procurement from starving peasants. Facing a famine, the government made saving the urban population its priority.

The hierarchical divisions of the supply systems went further. The governments in both countries provided the largest rations to similar groups, including the permanent workforce in heavy industry, soldiers, intellectuals, and party cadres. The Soviet rationing system in particular discriminated against temporary workers from the countryside, housewives, children, pensioners, and invalids, all of whom received very meager rations.[3] In the important cities of the Soviet Union, blue-collar workers in the highest category received rations of bread, flour, groats, fish, butter, sugar, tea, and eggs, while individuals in small and nonindustrial cities received only bread, sugar, groats, and tea.[4] Blue-collar workers were allowed to buy more meat than white-collar workers. Due to the rehabilitation of the intelligentsia, elite scholars from academic and scientific institutions were allotted the same rations as industrial workers in the highest category. Soldiers of the Red Army

were entitled to food rations even before the nationwide system was introduced in 1931, and their rations were higher still than those of industrial workers.[5] In the countryside, the political workers of the state-owned Machinery and Tractor Stations (MTS) were at the very top of the hierarchy. In the agricultural districts, approximately 24 million persons, mainly producers of industrial crops and peasants working in the timber industry, received rations in 1932.[6] At the opposite extreme, in both countries those imprisoned in labor camps were highly vulnerable because the state paid even less attention to their nutrition than in normal times.[7]

Ordinary peasants were not entitled to any rations from the state whatsoever. Elena Osokina estimates: "Although three times as many people lived in the countryside than in the city, the rural population received less than one-third of the commodities in the country under the rationing system."[8] During the famine, the urban rations of even the most favored groups were often not enough to eat one's fill, but they did at least provide sufficient calories for survival. In March 1932, the Politburo made the decision to reduce the allocation of grain for 20 million people who were on the lower-priority rations lists. The state was unable to provide full rations even if people were entitled to them in principle. As a result, towns and small cities experienced high death rates and hunger riots in the summer of 1932.[9]

In point of fact, the CCP also protected the urban population. The food supply was scant, but urban residents in the important cities seldom starved to death. The supply system unintentionally created incentives for the rural population to flee the countryside in order to find food in the cities. Obviously, if peasants ran away to the cities to avoid paying the "tribute" in the villages or to find better jobs, the state had to raise grain procurement rates correspondingly because it had more urban citizens to feed. Inevitably, the peasants who remained in the countryside had to shoulder an even higher burden as rapid urbanization resulted in a lack of manpower in the countryside. While the number of consumers in the supply system increased, the number of producers was significantly reduced. The Soviet Union and China experienced a rapid urbanization in a short period of time that was unparalleled in history. In the Soviet Union, the urban population increased from 26 million to 40 million between 1927 and 1932. Conversely, the number of peasant households dropped from 26 million in

1929 to 19 million in 1937.[10] In China, the urban population increased between 1957 and 1960 by over 19.5 million, and the number of workers rose by over 25.8 million.[11] The factories needed more workers in order to fulfill the high plan targets of the Great Leap, but at the same time the government considered uncontrolled migration and famine refugees a threat to urban stability.

PASSPORTS AND THE LIMITS OF RURAL MIGRATION

One way to lower the number of people who had to be fed by the state at the expense of the countryside was to reduce the urban population. The governments in both countries launched policies to limit rural migration to the cities by means of an internal passport system. In the Soviet Union, a new law in 1932 required all permanent residents of cities and towns or workers' settlements and employees of state-owned machine tractor stations to possess a passport. The goal was ostensibly to rid the cities of unwanted and unproductive elements such as criminals, unsupervised children, kulaks, and "hooligans," but the government also believed this campaign would reduce the number of people who received grain rations without justification. Moscow, Leningrad, and Kharkov were the first cities subjected to the passport law. In early 1933, the law was extended to thirteen cities and broader areas, among them Kiev, Minsk, Rostov, and Vladivostok.[12] This law clearly shows the geographical priorities that the government set. Peasants needed permission to work outside the kolkhoz, although they would receive internal passports only in the 1970s. As a result of the new law, hundreds of thousands of people were deported from the urban centers, and the population of Moscow was slightly reduced in 1934.[13] However, the introduction of the internal passport system limited rural migration only temporarily, and the surplus of arrivals over departures in the cities was between 2 and 3 million in 1934 and 1935.

Legislation for the Chinese internal passport or household registration system had already been introduced in January 1958, before the famine.[14] It was much more sophisticated than the Soviet system because it divided the entire population into agrarian and non-agrarian households, and the Ministry of State Security issued a registration card to every Chinese citizen. In spite of the system, the increase in the Chinese urban population between 1958 and 1960 was unprecedented in

history. While some of this rural-urban migration was planned by the state or promoted by manufacturing and industrial enterprises, peasants seized the opportunity to escape the rural famine. Tiejun Cheng, Mark Selden, and Timothy Cheek have argued that the vast decentralization of the economic system during the Great Leap made the implementation of passport regulations impossible.[15] In any event, the famine must certainly be considered a motivating factor for the exodus from the villages. Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik has argued in general that rural migration to the cities was also a way for peasants to express their dissatisfaction with government policies: "By leaving their villages, the rural population shows to the government that the stability of the country heavily relies on the stability of the countryside."[16]

During the famines, the governments overestimated the burden that the countryside and the urban supply system would be able to shoulder. Instead of understanding the exodus from the villages as a sign of rural famine, the Soviet and Chinese governments continued their policies. Their concern that refugees would destabilize the country led them to issue orders to control the railroads and to limit the access of famine refugees to means of transportation. Local cadres also often used violence and repression to drive famine refugees from their administrative region. The threat of an influx from outside state borders was equally real; in Kazakhstan, many Kazakh nomads attempted to escape the famine in 1931 by crossing over the border into China.[17] The state had abundant reason to be concerned about either kind of rural migration, which could spread news and rumors throughout the country. In June 1932, Stalin wrote to Lazar Kaganovich, a member of the Politburo and his closest ally at that time: "Several tens of thousands of Ukrainian collective farmers are still traveling around the entire European part of the USSR and are demoralizing our collective farms with their complaints and whining."[18]

Starving peasants were often unaware that hunger was a nationwide problem because the famine as a topic in the media was completely taboo on the principle that as long as starving peasants were uninformed about the situation elsewhere, they would not turn against the central government. The precaution may have been misplaced, for in point of fact starving populations seldom rebel during a peak of famine. Close to death, they are so focused on survival and access to food that hardly any political movements develop.[19] In the Soviet Union and particu-

larly in Ukraine, thousands of episodes of rural unrest took place in March 1930 in reaction against collectivization and dekulakization. However, during the peak of the famine in 1932–1933 unrest occurred only sporadically.[20] By ensuring the survival of the urban population and by limiting rural mobility, the Socialist regimes were able to maintain a certain level of stability, despite the fact that millions of people were starving to death. Instead of taking responsibility for feeding all citizens, the state created zones of entitlement and non-entitlement in order to deal with the shortage. To explain the decision to resort to this stratagem, it is important to recall that the Bolsheviks had had devastating experiences with the interaction of rural and urban famines. In 1918–1920, Russia faced an urban famine that was succeeded by rural famine in 1921–1922. After this experience, the leadership under Stalin became alarmed by serious urban shortages in 1928–1929 and decided to take as much grain as possible from the countryside in order to prevent famine in the centers of administration and among the working class, which were considered the bases of Socialist rule. The internal passport systems increased the suffering of peasants living in regions where migration to the cities was curtailed. Even so, it must be noted that during the famines the urban population continued to increase and the internal passport systems were not fully effective.

REGIME SURVIVAL AND FOREIGN THREATS

In order to better understand the behavior of Stalin and Mao during the famines, we should also take their experiences during the revolutions and their evaluation of the international environment into account. According to the perceptions of the party leadership, not only the peasants but also the revolutionary regimes had to struggle for survival. As a commissar of food supply on the southern front during the Civil War, Stalin had firsthand experience with grain requisitioning.[21] In order to survive the war, the party believed it had to take as much as possible from the countryside to feed the army. Grain procurement was thus considered the key link for the fate of the country. In August 1929, Stalin wrote to Vyacheslav Molotov, who became the head of the Soviet government in the following year: "The grain procurements have gone well. . . . If we can beat this grain thing, then we'll prevail in everything, both in domestic and foreign policies."[22]

The possibility of a counterrevolution or restoration of capitalism was not unwarranted paranoia on the part of the leadership. When the White troops reduced Bolshevik control to the core of Russia in 1918 and when the German Army came close to Moscow in 1941, leaders such as Stalin realized that the annihilation of Soviet power was possible. The famines of the Civil War had caused de-urbanization; between 1918 and 1920, the population of Moscow fell from 2.2 million to 1.1 million, and the population of St. Petersburg (Leningrad), from 2.3 million to 0.9 million.[23] Against the background of the collapse of the industrial economy, a frustrated Lenin made the sarcastic remark that the proletariat was the factory workers, but the factories were standing still.[24] Stalin wanted to avoid having industry break down again. Mao and the Chinese Communists were close to annihilation after the GMD massacre in Shanghai in 1927 and the defeat of the Soviet areas in Jiangxi in 1934. Mao was in charge of organizing the collection of grain during a famine in the Soviet base areas in 1933 during the encirclement of the GMD troops.[25] After the establishment of the PRC, the Korean War broke out, and the nationalists rebuilt their army on Taiwan in order to reconquer the mainland. The U.S. government threatened to use nuclear weapons if China attacked Taiwan. The leaders, including Stalin and Mao, knew that the survival of the revolutionary regimes could not be taken for granted. Facing real threats of war and paranoia concerning external and internal enemies, both supreme leaders considered it crucial to "beat the grain thing" to drive the progress of industrialization. In contrast to the West, where industrialization took place over centuries, the Soviet leadership believed it had to be achieved in just one decade or the young state would be crushed by imperialism. It was a shared outlook within the Communist movement that as long as imperialism existed, war would remain an imminent possibility.

Stalin's and Mao's perceptions of an external threat are absolutely central to any analysis of their behavior during the famines. During the grain crisis of 1928, Stalin warned that the grain deficit and the lack of reserves would cause serious trouble in the case of a military invasion by a foreign country. He asked his comrades, "Do you think we can defend the country if we have no reserves of grain for the army? Those comrades were perfectly right who said here that the peasant today is not what he was six years ago, say, when he was afraid that he might lose his land to the landlord. The peasant is already forgetting the land-

lord. He is now demanding new and better conditions of life. Can we, in the event of enemy attack, wage war against the external enemy on the battle front, and at the same time against the muzhik in the rear in order to get grain urgently for the army? No, we cannot and must not. In order to defend the country, we must have certain stocks for supplying the army, if only for the first six months."[26] Stalin made it clear that the grain problem had to be solved before a possible war broke out, and to this end, collectivization succeeded in increasing the amount of grain that was controlled by the state.[27]

Kuromiya argues that the factor of foreign relations is often missing in the debate over the causes of the famines but that the famines took place against the background of foreign threats, especially from Japan and Poland.[28] In September 1931, the Japanese Army occupied Chinese Manchuria. As a result, the most aggressive imperialist power in Asia shared a long border with the Soviet Union. In 1932, the Soviet defense budget rose by 250 percent over the previous year, at a time when the Soviet leadership considered Japan the primary war threat.[29] During the famine, the Soviet government declared it would import grain to build up stocks on the far eastern border, but according to Wheatcroft, the building up of reserves in the Far East made little progress, and the grain was used for the relief effort.[30] In the spring of 1931 and 1932, uprisings took place in the Chinese province of Xinjiang and against the Soviet-supported government in Mongolia, and in both cases, Stalin suspected Japanese influence among the rebels. In the case of Xinjiang, he even assisted the government with weapons and aircraft to crush the uprising.[31] In the following years, the Soviet Union achieved some improvements in foreign relations, including a treaty with Poland in 1932 and diplomatic recognition by the United States in 1933. In January 1933, Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany. For many years, the German Communists had argued that a victory by Hitler would mean war against the Soviet Union. A treaty between Germany and Poland in 1934 alarmed the Soviet leaders. Stalin feared that German, Japanese, and Polish intelligence agencies would support the nationalist movement for independence in Ukraine.[32] Facing the German threat from the west and the Japanese threat from the east, Stalin feared an outbreak of war on two fronts. With this in mind, it seems overly simple to regard the slogan of the Soviet Union as "the fortress besieged" as just a paranoid myth of the Soviet leadership.[33]

The Chinese international environment during the famine was also far from secure. During the high point of the Great Leap in October 1958, China provoked a limited act of warfare in the Taiwan Strait. Mao did not expect that the attack of the PLA on the islands of Jinmen and Mazu would result in an international war, thinking the U.S. government would be afraid of involvement.[34] However, U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower threatened China with the atomic bomb in the event the PLA did not stop the attack on Jinmen. As a result of American and Soviet pressure, the Chinese government ended the offensive. In contrast to the Soviet Union in the 1930s, the PRC in the 1950s was no "fortress besieged" but was supported by the Socialist camp. In 1959 Sino-Soviet relations worsened, but neither side expected war. It was only in 1969 that the Sino-Soviet split culminated in a border war.

In my view, Stalin and Mao were both sure it would be impossible to build socialism without a certain base of support from the peasantry in their agrarian empires. The peasant question was also closely linked to the issue of national defense because most PLA soldiers came from the countryside. This was also true for the Soviet Red Army after the enforcement of the military draft in the mid-1930s. Furthermore, during the Civil War and in the Red base areas, both parties realized it would be counterproductive to "kill the goose that lays the golden eggs." Russian "war communism" resulted in the NEP, and the CCP adopted more moderate policies in the mid-1930s after the failure of radical class struggle in the Jiangxi Soviet Republic. However, in a serious crisis and a threat of urban famine, the livelihood of the rural population was given no priority in either country. One could even argue that Stalin and Mao were willing to sacrifice the "worker-peasant alliance" on the altar of urban stability because they did not expect an outbreak of full-scale war during the famines.

How was the Soviet Union able to survive the war with Nazi Germany, and how could Stalin restore part of the legitimacy that he had lost during the famine? I believe that the answers are partly linked to the facts that the German government used hunger as a weapon against the people in the occupied areas and that the Soviet government was successful in preventing the outbreak of a major famine on the scale of those of 1921–1922 or 1931–1933. As noted in the introduction, the

Nazis planned to destroy and depopulate major cities in order to eliminate the centers of the working class and "useless eaters" by cutting off the consumer regions in the north of Russia from the food surplus regions in the south.[35] This strategy underlined the importance of the food supply to the industrial centers for the survival of the Soviet government. The "hunger plan" could be read as a lesson from the 1931–1933 famine. The Nazi planners might have assumed that the working class in the industrial centers was the group most loyal to the Socialist system within the population. However, the Nazi leadership did not try to ally seriously with the Slavic peasants against Stalin. It did not offer what many Ukrainian and Russian peasants had hoped for—the dissolution of the collective farms. On the contrary, the German administration used the collective farms to requisition more grain for the army and even planned to pass the farms on to German settlers.[36] These policies and the genocide against the Slavic population eliminated collaboration as an option for the vast majority of the Soviet people. The Soviet government was aware of its fragile support in the countryside. Stalin's rhetoric on Russian nationalism and his framing of the war against Nazi Germany as the great patriotic war to defend Russian soil can be understood as an attempt to gain more support among the rural population.[37]

The main proletarian centers of Russia, Moscow, and Leningrad were never conquered by the Nazis. The German Army failed to starve Leningrad into surrender. In contrast to the years of famine, the Soviet government allowed the expansion of private plots and markets during World War II, when the support of the rural population became more important than ever. "Indeed, the peasant question and the food-supply problems that had doomed the tsarist government and the Provisional Government during the First World War and nearly destroyed the Soviet state during the Civil War did not undermine the Soviet Government this time. During the war, the whole nation lived in utter poverty, but no significant disturbances threatened the nation. Whereas the Soviet Government procured some 15 million tons of grain in 1918–21 with force, it managed to procure as many as 70 million tons in 1941–45 without outright force."[38] It would have been much worse had there been any serious drought during the war years. The Nazi leadership had hoped that famine would drive the Soviet Union to collapse, but in

contrast to the famine of 1931–1933, the Soviet grain stocks were filled when the German Army attacked and the Soviet supply system contributed to winning the war. As the leader of the victorious "great patriotic war," Stalin's image improved at home and abroad. In contrast to the Soviet Union, the stability of the Chinese supply system and relations between the state and the peasantry were never tested by a large-scale war after the famine.

The policies of the Chinese and Soviet governments resulted in the deaths of millions of peasants. Instead of our speculating on whether Stalin and Mao deliberately intended to kill parts of the rural population, it is better to understand the famines in the context of the model for high-speed industrial development, rural-urban relations, and food hierarchies. During the famines, the Soviet and Chinese governments acted quite similarly, taking the social and political structures of the regimes and their goals of survival into account. The rapid urbanization during the Great Leaps increased by millions the number of people entitled to urban rations and created heavy pressure on the supply systems. Both governments decided to protect the urban population and caused even higher death rates in the rural areas as a result. Because so many people relied on state supplies, the Socialist governments were able to set priorities dictating who would live and who would be left with little or no support. The hierarchy of hunger reflected the Marxist-Leninist ideology of class, power, and productivity. Cities whose supply was organized by the central government had much better conditions than less important cities, which had to collect grain on their own in the nearby countryside. But famines in which predominantly the rural population suffered and died were hardly unique to Socialist systems. In nineteenth-century Europe, governments established grain stocks to protect urban consumers and the army.[39] The same is true in the case of colonial regimes; for example, the British colonial administration protected Calcutta during a famine in Bengal in 1943 because defense and heavy industry were located there. Over 1 million blue- and white-collar workers in Calcutta received ration cards, while 3 million peasants died in the countryside.[40] In many famines in Africa after World War II, governments had the same kind of urban basis, with cities serving as centers of administration and industry and governments wanting to ensure the loyalty of civil servants and workers in public

enterprises.[41] Unrest and riots in locations outside the centers of state power are understandably considered less dangerous than uprisings in the heart of the state. However, the Socialist state had much stronger means of limiting rural migration, such as an internal passport system, ration cards, and a party apparatus, than did other regimes. Despite the strong roots of the CCP in the countryside, the similar behavior of Stalin and Mao during the famines shows that both considered power in the cities as essential to the survival of the regimes. Furthermore, one reason for the Bolshevik victories in the Civil War and World War II was that major cities such as Moscow and Leningrad never fell to the enemy. In China, the Communists started with a rural strategy of guerrilla warfare, but they could conquer the whole of China only after 1947 with the industrial northeastern cities behind them. During the civil wars, Stalin and Mao were responsible for grain collection, and one may be sure that they drew a connection between the food supply and victory. Facing external threats in the 1930s and 1950s, they were in no position to take the survival of the revolution for granted.

The policies in both countries that ended the Great Leap famines were quite similar: lower procurement in the countryside, restoration of private agricultural plots, local markets, limited exports, and even (in the Chinese case) the import of grain. In the end, the state had to acknowledge the limits of exploitation of the peasants and introduced a mixed economy of state-owned, collectively owned, and private elements in the countryside. In the Soviet Union, the Great Leap was successful in the sense that the level of urbanization and industrialization could be maintained.[42] Millions of peasants had to pay with their lives for this high-speed industrialization. The CCP decided to send 20 million people back to the countryside in 1962–1963 to lower the burden for the peasants and reduce the number of people receiving food from the government supply system. Furthermore, China became a net importer of grain for the next decades. In many ways, China had to start again at the economic level of 1957 or even earlier. For the Soviet government, the success of economic breakthroughs and the victory over Nazi Germany made it easier to justify severe hardships for the population in the 1930s than was the case for the CCP. Instead of emphasizing achievements, Mao and his comrades could only blame the total failure of the Great Leap on the weather and on the "betrayal" by the Soviet Union.

One question that remains unanswered is why the Chinese Communists learned so little from the Soviet experience of famine. The three famines after the October Revolution ought to have given rise to a clear awareness that a radical transformation of society could lead to famine. The famine of 1921–1922 was no secret; it was reported in the international media. What is more, during the famine of 1931–1933, many Chinese cadres lived in the Soviet Union, and yet I have so far not found a single direct reference to the Soviet famine in the speeches of Chinese leaders. It remains unclear how much the Chinese government really knew about the extent of the loss of life caused by the Soviet famines of 1931–1933 and 1947. Mao criticized the Soviets for their exploitation of the peasants and believed it was a mistake to "dry the pond to catch the fish."[43] However, the Chinese Communists made the same mistakes as their Soviet counterparts and changed policies in 1962 only after millions of Chinese peasants had paid the "tuition fee" (*xuefei*) with their lives. Did the interaction between the Communist parties and the peasants result in famines even if leaders like Mao realized Stalin had gone too far in exploiting the countryside?

With this question in mind the next chapter will focus on the interactions between the peasants and the state in the context of food policies in the PRC after 1949.

II

The Politicization of Hunger in Maoist China

They hear from a few cadres that the situation in the countryside is not wonderful, three or four people whispering and saying that the [agricultural] cooperatives are not good, at the present everything is dark, the peasants cannot eat full. They say that production did not increase and there is no surplus grain and so on. When they write letters to their relatives in order to get money, they say that it is very serious, describing the situation as more difficult than it really is and claiming that there is no grain, no oil, no cotton at all; otherwise you would not send them money. But is there really no grain, no oil, and no cotton? . . . The wealthy middle peasants want to hoard grain and they do not want to give it away. They want to practice capitalism and shout that the life of the peasants is bitter.

—Mao Zedong, May 1958

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3 Hierarchies of Hunger and Peasant-State Relations (1949–1958)

WHEN THE CCP came to power in 1949, it promised the Chinese people that "no one would starve to death" *(bu rang e'si yige ren)*.[1] This was a promise that the government would not keep. This chapter will go into more detail regarding food policies and peasant-state relations between 1949 and 1958 in the PRC. Using newspapers, journals, speeches of senior officials, decisions of the party leadership, and internal sources, I will demonstrate how the topic of hunger became more and more politicized and explain how the conflicts that had developed in the early 1950s contributed to famine. First, the chapter will give an overview of debates concerning whether certain actions of the peasants could properly be defined as "resistance." The methodological challenges and problems in analyzing the forms and extent of "peasant resistance" based on official documents such as *Neibu Cankao* will be shown. Second, the conflicts between the state and the peasantry in the supply crises of 1953 and 1955 will be analyzed. Third, the chapter will demonstrate why hunger became strongly politicized and came to be a taboo topic during the Socialist Education Campaign in 1957, when the government began to believe that peasants were feigning hunger to avoid procurement and to receive famine relief. This development had deadly consequences when the famine actually broke out.

SCHOLARSHIP ON PEASANT RESISTANCE IN CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION

It is useful to include the Soviet case in discussing the methodological problems of research on peasant resistance. Relations between peasants and the Socialist state in China and the Soviet Union were highly complex. Although for decades after the October Revolution Western scholars mainly considered peasants to be passive actors or victims of the Socialist industrialization efforts, over the past twenty years new scholarship on peasant resistance in both countries has developed, inspired by the research of James C. Scott and others on the "weapons of the weak" and the "hidden transcripts of resistance."[2] Lynne Viola and Sheila Fitzpatrick studied uprisings among the Russian peasantry against collectivization in 1929–1930 as well as other, more silent forms of resistance, such as the underreporting of production, theft, and noncooperation or slowdowns during work in the early and mid-1930s.[3]

In contrast to the Soviet Union in 1929–1930, according to present knowledge no national wave of peasant uprisings took place during the Mao era in China (1949–1976). Ralph Thaxton and Gao Wangling have both published significant books on everyday peasant resistance in China. Gao prefers a term of his own creation, "counter-actions" *(fan xingwei)*, instead of resistance *(fankang* or *kangyi)* because both stealing and the underreporting of production were reactions to state policies that were necessary for survival, and according to him these counter-actions contributed to the reform of the agricultural system.[4] Gao believes that with the help of local cadres, peasants underreported about 20 percent of production from the early 1960s to the 1970s. Combined with a permanent slowdown of work in the collective fields, the counter-actions resulted in the bankruptcy of collective agriculture. Thaxton applies Gao's term to the early period of collectivization in the 1950s but argues that during the 1960 famine counter-actions would have manifested as overt forms of "anti-state resistance," with peasants starting to "eat green" or steal unripe grain from the fields on a large scale, thereby forcing the state to change the harsh procurement policies of the Great Leap Forward.[5] In contrast to Thaxton, Chen Yixin questions the practice of "eating green" as resistance against the state, even if local cadres tried to prevent it. He argues that the state took its fixed share from the harvest anyway, so peasants would "eat green"

from their own share and not from the state's share of the crops.[6] Chen may have a point. However, I would argue that the official media were already criticizing "eating green" in the early 1950s because the state believed that such a practice would harm the crops and make planning difficult.[7]

While Gao and Thaxton have emphasized the transformative power of peasant actions, Jean Oi has argued that in the early 1980s state-peasant relations after the famine were based on a silent agreement. Within a framework of local patronage politics, many local cadres would turn a blind eye both to stealing and to the underreporting of land and production so that the peasants would have enough to eat and were able to survive.[8] The upper levels of the administration would not openly attack such practices as long as the purchasing quotas were fulfilled, order was maintained, and the concealment of grain did not exceed a certain limit. The peasants were so dependent on the local cadres that it was dangerous to go over this limit. Oi's approach seems similar to Scott's thesis in *Seeing like a State* that resistance from below is often necessary to enable systems that were designed by high modernist states.[9] It is ironic that without private plots, local black markets, and the underreporting of production, collective agriculture would have collapsed even earlier.

In *Mao's Great Famine*, Dikötter makes a strong argument against this paradigm of peasant resistance during the times of famine.[10] "Just about everybody, from top to bottom, stole during the famine, so much so that if these were acts of 'resistance' the party would have collapsed at a very early stage. . . . When food was finite, one individual's gain was all too often another's loss. When farmers hid the grain, the workers outside the village died of hunger. . . . To romanticise what were often utterly desperate ways of surviving is to see the world in black and white, when in reality collectivisation forced everybody, at one point or another, to make grim moral compromises."[11] Dikötter compares the famine with the situation in Nazi concentration camps, where prisoners often were forced to harm others in order to get extra food rations. During famines the moral values of society collapse, parents sacrifice their own children, and the strong steal food from the weak. However, Gao argues that the underreporting and concealment of grain were possible only when production team cadres either supported or turned a blind eye to these actions.[12] Some local cadres took a great risk in

order to help other villagers and their own families. It seems that egoistic behavior and forms of solidarity existed side by side in the villages. Furthermore, the Chinese village was no concentration camp, and many peasants succeeded in escaping. Dikötter writes that the urban population increased by 31 million between 1957 and 1960.[13] (This number seems to include small towns *[zhen]* as well.) This increase shows that the government did not impose the restrictions of the household registration system in a strict way and that many people could survive with jobs in the cities. Dikötter is right that the importance of "resistance" is often overstated. However, it is too simplistic to consider the "weapons of the weak" the selfish behavior of individuals in a zero-sum game.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE OFFICIAL ACCOUNT AND THE NARRATIVE OF THE "GRAIN STRIKE"

In the field of Soviet studies, Tauger has taken issue with the strong emphasis on peasant resistance in the research. He argues that reports of resistance often provide mostly local examples rather than evidence of a nationwide movement. Institutions such as the Soviet secret police had a strong bias toward negative events and dissent.[14] The secret police had to uncover "resistance" and "dissent" in order to justify their own existence as an institution. Tauger suggests instead an examination of why most peasants accepted the system of collective agriculture. *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* published a debate among scholars as to what kind of behavior can be considered resistance. In this debate Peter Fritzsche argues that the "resistance paradigm" treats the population and the regime as two different and separate bodies, and he believes the role of ideology and its impact on the population should not be underestimated in this context. The regime was not merely an external power but one that was internalized by many subjects.[15] Viola, who has done research on peasants in the 1930s, argues that resistance is only a small element of the societal responses to the Stalinist state; they included accommodation, adaptation, acquiescence, apathy, internal migration, opportunism, and support for the regime. If local protest or unrest were aimed simply against local officials or against the Socialist regime as such, it would rely on the eye of the beholder—the historian, local official, security police agent, or central authority. In the villages, personal and political

conflicts often overlapped, and from an official perspective, drinking bouts (for instance) could become a dangerous and politicized terrain. Thus "resistance" can be a slippery concept, with official documents and petitions difficult to analyze. Did peasants and workers manipulate official discourse in their letters and petitions to higher authorities, or did they believe in what they wrote? Viola asks, "Did peasants and workers write to Kalinin because they saw him as their 'all-union elder' and needed a traditional source of authority, or was it all just a ploy? Did peasants and workers cloak themselves in the mantle of backwardness to depoliticize their demands for reasons of safety? Or was this kind of rhetoric a ritualized discourse?"[16] The same questions can be asked about party officials and members of the secret police as authors of reports and documents because they had to hew to a certain narrative of class struggle and Marxist-Leninist language. Did the rich peasant really complain of hunger, or did the writer put this complaint in the mouth of a "bad element" in order to protect himself or herself? One way to answer these questions would be to ask the writers of such documents. While in the Chinese case many eyewitnesses are still alive, their memory is also influenced by later experience and views of the present day, and it is very difficult today to locate a person who wrote a document so long ago. Most of the high-ranking cadres of 1958 have passed away.

Tauger and Viola point out some important problems in current scholarship that also apply to the Chinese case, where narratives of resistance were quite anecdotal indeed. Gao's research is primarily based on the oral history of several villages and his personal observations as an "educated youth" *(zhiqing)* during the Cultural Revolution, and Thaxton's research is primarily based on one village in Henan. To understand the "hidden transcripts" of rural society, one must, like Gao or Thaxton, travel to the villages and carry out micro-scale research for several years, and many scholars whose research concerns the central government are unaware of local practices of resistance. In the end, it is difficult to evaluate how transferable the experience of a single village is to that of the entire country. The practice of "eating green," which according to Thaxton was the major strategy of resistance during the famine, is mentioned in only a few of the documents that are available at present.[17] Gao's statement that peasants underreported 20 percent of production after 1962 is based on an estimate by senior official Du

Runsheng, who served as an important cadre in the central government during the agricultural reforms.[18] However, numbers for the decade after 1962 cannot be verified by any other sources. Many reports on "concealing production and private distribution" in *Neibu Cankao* can be found only for 1956–1957 and 1959. Because it is not feasible to send hundreds of interviewers to Chinese villages and because there is no access to many archives, scholarship on peasant resistance is necessarily anecdotal, but nevertheless it remains very important for understanding peasant-state relations, and the works of Thaxton and Gao are major achievements whose importance is not limited to the field of China studies.

Written documents, like oral sources, also have limitations, although formerly secret documents are now more readily accessible in China and Russia. It is also worth the effort to read official newspapers and journals; in official publications many articles about both peasant resistance and hunger can be found, and it is apparent that the articles are closely related to changes in the official policies. As an example, the assertion that peasants hid grain to sabotage the grain procurement and keep more for themselves appeared sporadically in the official media for a time, later disappearing. In the Soviet Union, this accusation was widespread in 1918–1919, during the urban famine and the so-called "food dictatorship,"[19] when the Bolsheviks wanted to mobilize the rural poor against the kulaks.[20] During the rural famine of 1931–1933, the writer Mikhail Sholokhov wrote a letter complaining about the coercive measures cadres were taking against peasants in the Kuban area. In May 1933, Stalin responded: "The respected tillers of the soil in your raion (and not only your raion!) have conducted an *'ital'ianka'* (sabotage!) and would not have any qualms about leaving the working class and the Red Army without bread. That fact that the sabotage was quiet and overtly innocent (without blood)—that fact does not change the position that the respected tillers of the soil in essence conducted a 'quiet' war against Soviet power. A war to starve us out *(voinu na izmor)*, comrade Sholokhov."[21] Michael Ellman describes this strategy as "accusation in a mirror," meaning that the Soviet government had itself waged a war of starvation against the countryside.[22] In response to Ellman, Davies and Wheatcroft have refuted the claim that Stalin starved the peasants deliberately and thus believe the term "accusation in the mirror" does not fit.[23] Furthermore, despite Stalin's harsh reply to Sholokhov, he sent a high-level commission to the area that found

Sholokhov's charges to be justified, with the result that the Politburo decided to send relief grain.[24]

In China, the narrative of feigning hunger also became important at several junctures. In the context of the integration of Tibet into the Chinese state in the early 1950s, the Tibetan elite were attacked for starving out the PLA by hiding grain (see chapter 6 for details). As far as I know, while this accusation is repeated several times in the official history books and memoirs in China today, it was not mentioned at that time in public. In the history of the PRC, 1957 provides the richest material on peasant resistance. During the Socialist Education Campaign in 1957, the press accused peasants of feigning hunger in order to obtain relief. In times when the state carried out more moderate agricultural policies, such as during the NEP (1921–1928) in the Soviet Union or in China after 1962, the accusation of feigning hunger did not appear. This example shows the limits of studying peasant resistance through the eyes of the media or government decisions, as it seems that reports of peasants hiding grain occurred more often when the state wanted to take more grain from the countryside. Furthermore, in China during the famine in late 1959, several provinces started campaigns against the underreporting of grain that led to deadly consequences for the peasants in these regions, and these important campaigns were not mentioned in *The People's Daily* at all. The official media tell us more about state responses and policies than about the actions of the peasants themselves. Scott has argued that the state rarely wanted to publicize the insubordination behind everyday resistance: "To do so would be to admit that their policy is unpopular and, above all, would expose the tenuousness of their authority in the countryside—neither of which most sovereign states find in their interest."[25] While this might be true in general terms, both the Soviet and Chinese cases demonstrate that the state could occasionally have an interest in reporting about resistance in order to justify its policies, as coercive measures were justified with the argument that order had to be enforced. The confiscation of grain from the minority of "saboteurs" was presented as being in the interests of the majority of peasants, workers, and the army. The class struggle narrative made it possible to address the issue of resistance without acknowledging the unpopularity of the rural policies.

In the Chinese case, some interesting material can be found under the label of "grain work" *(liangshi gongzuo)*. *Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China*, a volume for internal use, provides a

very detailed chronology of important decisions regarding many aspects of purchasing, sales, and distribution.[26] Even in this internal material, information about the most terrible period of the famine during the first half of 1960 is often missing or incomplete, and hunger is seldom mentioned. In *Neibu Cankao*, information on hunger and famine is not easy to find. However, there are also hard facts to measure the balance of power between the state and the rural population that are reflected in the grain procurement rates and tax burden, the rural and urban levels of nutrition, and the government expenditures on disaster relief or food imports instead of exports. Without our going so far as to see every peasant as a resistance fighter against the Socialist government, it still cannot be denied that serious conflicts between the state and the peasantry developed. This chapter will focus on the conflict over hunger and food before the Great Leap Forward famine.

"NOBODY WILL STARVE TO DEATH": THE PROMISE OF NEW CHINA

When New China was founded on October 1, 1949, it was already suffering from natural disasters. A report of the central government from November 1949 stated that in that year 40 million people had been affected by natural disasters and 7–8 million had been left with no or not enough food.[27] The government promulgated the slogan "produce to provide relief from disaster" *(shengchan jiuzai)*. The Ministry of Civil Affairs under minister and vice-president of the central government Dong Biwu was responsible for the relief effort in response to natural disasters. The ministry also issued annual reports on disaster relief in the early 1950s. In January 1950, the ministry instructed officials: "All levels of the People's Government have a high responsibility regarding famine relief. Nobody should starve to death."[28] Official publications in the PRC claim that it was Mao himself who put forward this slogan.[29] The new regime felt that its legitimacy was closely linking to the prevention of famine. Liu Shaoqi, later the president of China, argued around this time: "Now, the people are suffering from disasters. Although it is not the fault of the People's Government that disasters occur, the People's Government should assume responsibility for disaster relief. We should not be afraid to shoulder this burden. If we do not demand that 'Nobody should starve to death,' how can

we be regarded as the People's Government?"[30] Li Xiannian, later the vice–prime minister who was in charge of the disaster relief in Hubei Province, said that if the government could save peasants from starving to death, they would be on the side of the Communist Party forever. If not, there would be a danger that peasants in some places would support the landlords.[31] Some cadres felt that it was problematic to publish the slogan "Nobody should starve to death" because if some did die of hunger, it would harm the reputation of the government. However, Dong Biwu argued that the slogan should be mentioned in the media and through propaganda because such a slogan would be a test for every level of government and cadres.[32]

In the early documents that were issued on disaster relief, the central government already emphasized that it would take natural disasters very seriously and send relief in cases where famine was unavoidable and local or provincial governments were unable to solve the problem on their own. At the same time, local governments should make all possible efforts and mobilize the masses to restore production according to the slogan "produce to provide relief for yourself" *(shengchan zijiu)*, and non-disaster areas should help areas that were harder hit.[33] In fact, such a tradition of self-reliance had developed in the Red-base areas during the civil war with the GMD because the CCP could not rely on any relief from the hostile central government.

Relief was given in the form of credits, and in some places jobs were provided instead of money *(gongdaizhen)*, as victims of disasters *(zaimin)* were employed to build new irrigation works. Dong made it clear that the inhabitants of the disaster areas should save food and rely also on wild plants and food substitutes. The central government would provide grain from Sichuan, Hunan, and Jiangxi Provinces for relief to disaster areas in the north of China. As before in Republican China, peasants now again escaped from the disaster areas. Migration was a traditional survival strategy for Chinese peasants because only certain regions were affected by famine, never the whole country. However, Dong argued that such migration would harm the goal of producing to provide relief for oneself and cause social instability.[34] A better way to stop the migration would have been to restore production, not just to force the peasants to stay. Be that as it may, in the early and mid-1950s the Ministry of Civil Affairs issued several documents to remind local governments that it was their responsibility to prevent

Table 3.1. The Situation of Spring Shortages (Chunhuang), 1949–1964

Year	Affected Population	Migration from Disaster Areas	People Affected by Nutrition-Related Diseases	Sons and Daughters Sold or Given Away	Non-Regular Deaths
1949		1,790,000			
1950	49,200,000	350,000		331	7,995
1951	20,930,000	90,000		667	2,713
1952	23,880,000	40,000		66	948
1953	38,240,000	130,000		159	263
1954	24,430,000	190,000		437	475
1955	69,920,000	520,000		3,424	1,477
1956	20,140,000	210,000		568	10,012
1957	41,340,000	600,000		699	273
1958	19,790,000	400,000	450,000	518	57,751
1959	97,660,000	2,350,000	3,020,000		17,853
1960	129,770,000	2,090,000	4,740,000	10,688	374,890
1961	218,130,000	80,000	30,390,000	666,000	647,010
1962	187,450,000	1,590,000	6,270,000	3,531	11,016
1963	70,380,000	430,000	1,440,000	421	1,086
1964	82,950,000	1,730,000	3,810,000	638	905

Source: Guojia tongjiju, minzhengju, ed., *Zhongguo zaiqing baogao 1949–1995* [China Calamity Report 1949–1995] (Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 1996), 267.

peasants from fleeing the disaster areas and to organize the return of the refugees.[35] The control of the roads and the railway system was an important aspect of this policy. The government also believed that migration would cause land and food conflicts in the areas of refuge. Social stability was valued above the interests of the individual peasant. Peasants were exhorted to stay in their villages, to try to restore production, and to trust the promises of the government. As a result, peasants in disaster areas were highly reliant on the relief efforts of the local and central governments. As official statistics show, the government was not able to enforce its regulations fully; hundreds of thousands of peasants were still escaping from the "spring shortages" *(chunhuang)* almost every year in the 1950s (see table 3.1). Although there are no data for all years, these statistics nonetheless indicate the huge numbers of people that were affected.

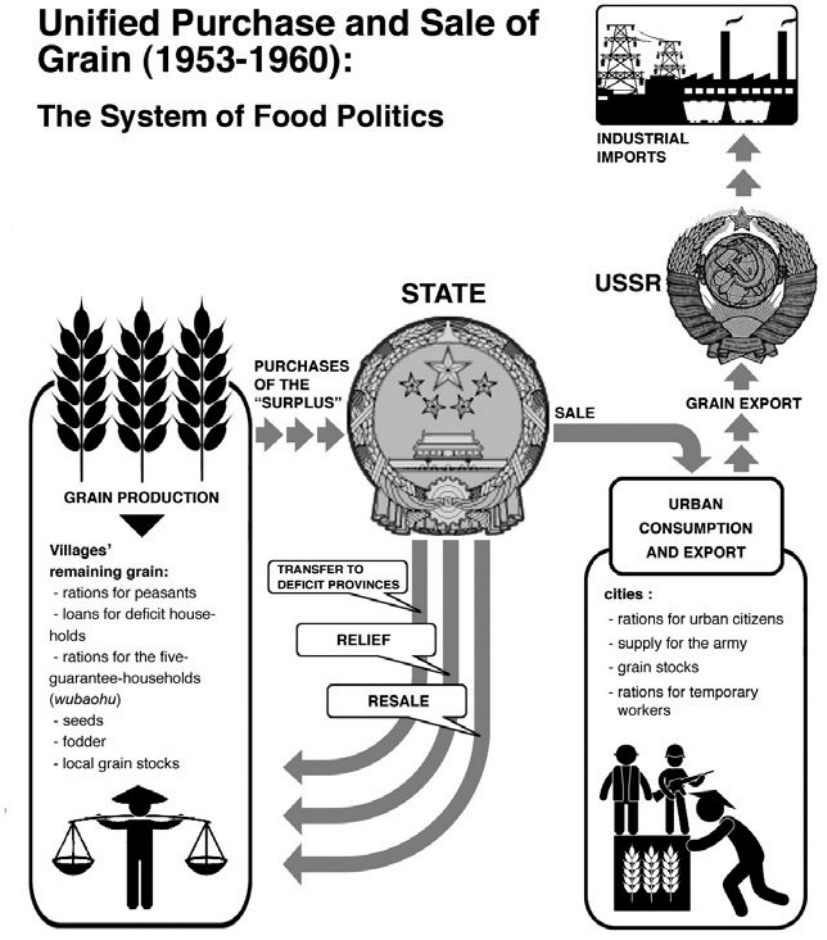
Early documents show the willingness of the new regime to organize disaster relief, but the government made it unmistakably clear that re-

sources were severely limited and that local authorities had to restore production and save food in order to avoid famine. It is of some interest that in the early documents the traditional word for disaster victim *(zaimin)* was still in use, while to my knowledge the term cannot be found in documents during the Great Leap Forward famine. The government established a form of "moral economy" by promising an end to deadly famines. Against this background, peasants in disaster areas could demand relief. As a result, the government was under intense pressure because resources were limited in a poor country that had been dealt severe setbacks by Japanese occupation and civil war. In China in the early and mid-1950s, millions of disaster victims received relief from the state. Between 1950 and 1957, between 20 and 69 million peasants were affected by spring shortages every year. Because it was clear that the central government lacked sufficient resources to provide relief for all its disaster victims, the relief system that was established in the early 1950s relied heavily on local initiatives and resources. Unsurprisingly, the slogan "Nobody should starve to death" disappeared from the articles of the *People's Daily* in the mid-1950s.[36] The famine of 1959–1961 starkly demonstrated that the government was not able to shoulder the burden of its promise.

THE SYSTEM OF GRAIN DISTRIBUTION IN THE PRC

As I have argued above, we should look at the whole system of grain distribution to understand the development of the famine. The cornerstones of this system were the unified purchase and sale of grain by the state, introduced in 1953, and the nationwide urban rationing that was established in 1955.[37] Only in the 1980s was this system abolished. Before turning to the historical development of food politics, I would like to explain the system of grain distribution via the graph shown.

The state set quotas for the provinces and purchased "surplus" grain *(yuliang)* from the agricultural collectives for a fixed price. The remaining grain in the countryside was used for rations to the peasants *(kouliang)*, seeds, fodder, and local stocks. Peasants received their grain rations partly per head and partly as an exchange for "work points" *(gongfen)*, measuring their work performance in the collectives and later in the People's Communes. Families with many old members and small children but few young and strong workers often earned too few work points to eat full, but they could borrow grain from the team,



the lowest unit of the collective. Some old and disabled people without families also received grain rations as social welfare, the so-called *wubaohu*, but only a very small part of the rural population was enrolled in this program.

After the state had purchased the grain, retransfers to the countryside were necessary. Some provinces were traditional grain-deficit areas and others suffered from unstable agricultural factors that varied every year. As a result of a complicated process of negotiation between the central government and the provinces, grain was transferred to

the deficit regions.[38] In the case of great natural disasters that affected several provinces, the central government also would send relief grain *(jiuliang)*, but first it would appeal to the provinces and the villages to restore production and mobilize local sources. Furthermore, the government could also resell grain to the peasants *(fanxiao)* if the collectives could afford it.

The state sold the purchased grain in the cities for fixed prices. People who held urban household registrations or temporary work permits were entitled to receive ration cards *(liangpiao)*, and the cards could be used to buy a certain amount of grain. Furthermore, the state had to fill urban grain stocks and to feed the army. Until 1960, the government was able to export grain and other foodstuffs, mainly to Socialist countries, so that it could import industrial goods and technology. The speed of industrialization in China in the 1950s was linked to the ability to export grain and feed the increasing urban workforce. If peasants consumed more grain and sold less to the state, the government was forced to limit the consumption of the urban population and exports. However, if the urban population and its consumption increased, the state had to purchase more grain in the countryside and risked massive conflicts with the peasantry. If the government wanted to raise the price of purchase, urban food prices would increase or the government would have to pay subsidies to balance the gap. Subsidies were a major burden for the state budget after 1961.

The feeding of the urban population and the army and exports had priority, even if more grain than the "surplus" had to be collected from the countryside and peasants did not have enough to eat. These priorities changed only in 1961, when the government decided to import grain to feed parts of the urban population. It was a great challenge to maintain a balance among rural purchases, urban sales, and exports. The policies of the Great Leap Forward destroyed the labile balance that was documented between 1953 and 1958.

THE FIRST SUPPLY CRISIS IN 1953 AND THE UNIFIED PURCHASE AND SALE OF GRAIN

Before we turn to the grain policies, an explanation regarding the official statistics and rationing schedules is in order. In the PRC, production statistics were registered for raw grain *(yuanliang)*—that means

unprocessed. The urban and army rations, grain sales by the state, and grain in storage reserves, on the other hand, were registered as "trade grain" *(maoyi liang* or *shangpin liang)*. The conversion rate from husked to trade grain was not clearly defined. Walker estimates that the rate was approximately 86 percent in the 1950s—that is, every unit of raw grain would yield .86 of a unit of trade grain, ready to cook.[39] In contrast to the rations for the urban society, the rations and consumption for peasants were usually calculated in raw grain.[40] However, some documents of that time did not specify whether the statistics for rural rations were in raw or trade grain. It is obvious that in a poor country like China or in a famine situation, a difference of about 14 percent in consumption can be a matter of life or death. I shall make a point of giving the category of measurement of rural consumption whenever this information is mentioned in the original source.

After the founding of the PRC in 1949, the country and the economy recovered from civil war and inflation. Grain production increased between 1949 and 1952 by over 44 percent according to the official statistics.[41] However, the conflict between the state and the peasants over the surplus would result in the first serious supply crisis in 1953. In his history of the grain supply system Luo Pinghan writes that after the land reform and tax reduction, many peasants began to consume more grain than ever before rather than selling it. In some areas, peasants ate three meals a day instead of two. Especially the poorest peasants, who subsisted on sweet potatoes and wild herbs, wanted to keep more grain for themselves.[42] Having previously experienced widespread famine, peasants took advantage of the increase in production to store more grain. Consequently, it became more and more difficult to guarantee the supply for the increasing urban population. The official statistics provide a clear picture. Between 1949 and 1952 the grain that peasants used for planting, livestock, and consumption increased by over 26 percent.[43] While in 1950 peasants ate around 1.27 *jin* (630 grams) of grain per day, it was 1.35 *jin* (670 grams) in 1952.[44] Yet, more abundant eating in the countryside could not have been the preponderant reason for the supply problems in the cities, for the individual consumption of the peasants increased by a mere 40 grams a day in the first three years after "liberation." Still, given that 80 percent of the Chinese lived in the countryside, a small increase in consumption, along with the recovery of livestock production and its concomitant demands for feed grain, made a big difference.

Furthermore, at that time private grain traders still existed, prices were highly unstable, and the state had just begun to build up its own system of granaries. In October 1953 the supply crisis was used as a major argument by senior officials to justify the introduction of the unified purchase and sale of grain. Mao Zedong argued that 10 percent of the peasants were what was called "lack of grain households" *(queliang hu)*—that is, they lacked sufficient grain for subsistence—and that 20–40 million peasants suffered from natural disasters every two years.[45] While in the beginning the abolition of the free market was justified by the necessity of feeding the urban population and peasants in the disaster areas, the party soon presented the system of unified purchase and sale simply as the Socialist way. After 1957, this system would include almost all agricultural products, and it was not until the mid-1980s that it was abandoned.

In order to convince the peasants to sell their "surplus" grain, the state made patriotic appeals, arguing that the grain was needed for the economic development of the country and the supply of the army, whose membership was almost exclusively peasant. Advantages for the peasants would include stable prices, avoidance of exploitation by private traders, and relief in the case of famine.[46] Many peasants complained about the low purchase prices and felt unsafe in handing over the grain to the state. An entire moral framework was built around the "tribute" to the state; for example, in Tibet a tax with the official name of "patriotic grain tax" *(aiguoliang)* was introduced in 1959. The moralizing rhetoric could be radicalized to the point that a peasant who was not willing to sell grain to the state was labeled unpatriotic and seen as sabotaging the economic development of the motherland; what is more, the meaning of "surplus" was never clearly defined.[47] In many places, cadres used violent means to force peasants to sell their "surplus." In November 1953, the Central Committee circulated a report about a county in Shandong Province where peasants were killed as a result of the campaign, despite the government's prohibition of the use of violent means to collect grain.[48] Not long after the state grain monopoly was established, reports complained that peasants were underreporting production, some even listing themselves inaccurately as "lack of grain households."[49] In fact, what constituted a "surplus household" *(yuliang hu)*, "self-sustaining household" *(zizhu hu)*, or "lack of grain household" was always controversial. In 1954 and 1955, the government succeeded in increasing the procurement rates and collected more

to feed the urban population, but it was soon forced to acknowledge tension in its relations with the peasants caused by the fact that the procurement rate was increased if more was produced. In 1953, urban rationing was introduced as well. While urban areas were subsidized by the state, rural society relied on its own resources and production.

The privileges afforded to the cities did not go unquestioned. In 1953, Liang Shuming, an intellectual and former leader of the Rural Reconstruction Movement of the Republican era, expressed the opinion that workers lived in the ninth heaven and peasants in the ninth hell and that after liberation, the Communist Party had forgotten the peasants and the countryside. According to Liang, the biggest problem was not the shortage of resources but their unequal distribution. Mao's subsequent attack against Liang came in one of the most aggressive speeches he gave in his life. He warned that an adjustment of urban and rural wages would lead to the ruin of industry and to the decline of the state. He questioned Liang's right to speak on behalf of the peasants and abused him with all the invectives the Communist vocabulary had to offer.[50]

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT: DO NOT WASTE GRAIN

After the establishment of the unified system for the purchase and sale of grain, the state also tried to curb consumption by educating people not to waste food. As is true of hunger, waste cannot be defined in an objective way. Chinese peasants knew that uncontrolled consumption in the family would result in hunger later. In contrast to ordinary times, rural customs dictated that dinners at weddings and funerals or during spring festivals had to be generous, but starting in early 1950, the official media criticized "waste" *(langfei)* or "shows of extravagance," and local cadres were instructed to educate peasants not to waste. For example, in November 1953 the *People's Daily* reported that a member of a rural party branch had slaughtered a 210-*jin* pig for a wedding, provided over 40 *jin* of hard liquor, and invited over one hundred people who liked to drink. Such behavior was considered serious profligacy by the author, who explained that preventing waste did not have to mean going hungry or abstaining from wedding banquets. Nevertheless, saving grain would be advantageous for everyone because it would help the economic development of the country

and prevent natural disasters from leading to famine *(jihuang)*.[51] The party also encouraged the peasants to change their nutritional habits. One way to save grain was to plant and eat more squash and vegetables.[52] During the famine in 1960, the food policies of the party toward the peasants were based on the slogan "Supplement low rations with squash and vegetables" *(guacai dai, di biaozhun)*.

In regions that were often afflicted by famine, peasants "ate green." The state considered this practice a problem because it could damage the crop and limit production outputs. Few documents on "eating green" can be found, although it was sometimes mentioned in the context of education to avoid a waste of grain. The *People's Daily* reported about a county in Jilin Province in which peasants ate "green" maize. There was a span of twenty-five days between the phase of "eating green" and the time the maize would reach ripeness. The cadres tried to dissuade the peasants from "eating green" by explaining that if nine hundred residents of a village ate one meal of "green" maize a day, nine thousand liters of grain would be lost in the season.[53] Instead of "eating green," the villagers should extend mutual aid to help the families with difficulties. The article sheds light on the hardships in that village if people could not wait for twenty-five days to eat the harvested maize. Several other articles also claimed that peasants in disaster areas should be educated not to "eat green" because it would not be very nourishing and would lower the production results.[54] One article was even titled "Eating Green Maize and Soy Beans Is Wasting Grain."[55] The state's efforts to stop waste included a prohibition against "eating green."

THE HIERARCHY OF URBAN RATIONING

After rationing was introduced in 1953, the legal urban population received grain distributions from the state. Naturally, the state was concerned that an uncontrolled increase in urban sales would cause difficulties with purchases in the countryside. Between September 1954 and April 1955, the urban population increased by 5 percent, and the sales of grain increased by over 12 percent.[56] One way of reducing the sales was to recheck the number of urban inhabitants and the eaters in dining halls, factories, and government agencies. Work units were attacked in the media for overreporting their number of workers in order to get more grain for their dining halls. For example, the *People's*

Daily reported on an enterprise in the city of Shijiazhuang in Hebei Province that overreported the number of its residents and by so doing wasted grain. One enterprise with over 100 employees reported an additional 350 people in order to receive fourteen thousand additional *jin* of grain every month. Other dining halls would waste so much that they used old steamed dumplings *(mantou)* for their cooking fires. Then the people in Shijiazhuang were educated to believe that "saving grain means honor," and they were encouraged to volunteer to save 50–100 grams a day.[57] Such savings would amount to a large quantity of grain considering the size of the urban population. In this context, it is interesting to note that the state argued that the urban population should save grain because "millions of peasants in our country are performing hard physical labor and waging a brave battle against natural disasters in order to increase production."[58] In sharp contrast, in the countryside the state argued that saving was necessary for the sake of the economic construction of the country.

It is unclear how effective the campaign was to educate people to save grain. Nevertheless, the state was able to reduce the sale of grain in cities after the unified urban rationing system was introduced throughout the country in September 1955. In October 1955, 10 percent less grain was sold in 238 cities than in the previous year.[59] The government believed it would be easier to provide food to the urban population and to keep consumption under control by employing a standardized rationing system and registration cards. With the exception of the famine years, the measure of urban rations that was established in September 1955 would not change during the decade of the planned economy. Compared to the situation in the countryside, urban rations were much higher for heavy labor (see table 3.2). The hierarchy of rationing reflected the value that the Communists placed on heavy labor; only manual labor was considered to be productive. A worker who performed heavy labor in wheat-consuming areas would receive an average ration of between 720 and 900 grams per day—the two highest rations categories.[60] Workers who performed light physical labor and college students received an average of around 570 grams per day. Employees of government agencies and intellectuals received around 508 grams per day. As noted above, the grain rations of the urban population were in processed grain or "finished product" *(chengpin*

Table 3.2. Urban Rationing Schedule (August 25, 1955) (monthly allowance of processed grain in jin)

Category of Recipient and Age	Rice-Consumption Areas		Wheat- and Coarse Grain–Consumption Areas	
	Range	Average	Range	Average
Extraordinary physical labor	45–55	50	50–60	55
Heavy physical labor	35–44	40	40–49	44
Light physical labor	26–34	32	29–39	35
Employees of government agencies and organizations and public and private enterprises; store clerks; and other "brain" workers	24–29	28	27–32	31
Students (college and high school)	26–33	32	29–36	35
General residents and children 10 and over	22–26	25	24–28	27.5
Children, 6–9	16–21	20	18–23	22
Children, 3–6	11–15	13	12–17	14
Children under 3	5–10	7	6–11	8

Source: "Shizhen liangshi dingliang gongying zanxing banfa" [Provisional Method for the Distribution of Grain Rations in Cities and Towns], in *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi [A Collection of Important Documents since the Founding of the State] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), 7:116–117.

liang).[61] Meanwhile, the urban population had far superior access to additional food, which could be purchased with one's monthly salary, as well as to other rationed goods like soap or cloth. In China during the Mao era, the consumption of meat and eggs was considered a luxury. In 1955, the urban population consumed 10.2 kilograms of pork per person, while the peasants ate only 4.3 kilograms that year.[62] In many rural areas, nutrition was mainly based on a vegetarian diet and meat was consumed only during festivals and weddings.

People who were entitled to urban rations also ate more of the grains that were considered high-quality, such as wheat and white rice. Other kinds of grain *(zaliang)*, such as corn, sweet potatoes, and sorghum, were regarded as less nutritious and less desirable. For the state it was easier to collect and store wheat and rice than, for example, sweet

potatoes *(ganshu* or *hongshu)*, which would rot faster. The official media urged people to eat more sweet potatoes in order to save wheat and rice for the state to purchase.[63] In the cities and the more prosperous agricultural regions in the south, many people considered sweet potatoes "famine food" or even food for pigs, while in poorer provinces such as Henan or Anhui, peasants relied heavily on sweet potatoes for survival. Campaigns aimed at increasing the consumption of sweet potatoes in the cities seem not to have been very successful in the years before the famine.

IN THE PERIOD OF THE "THREE-FIX" POLICY (1955–1957): REAL OR FEIGNED HUNGER?

It seems that during the first supply crisis in 1953, the leadership was not sure how to evaluate reports of hunger from the countryside. With the introduction of the "Three-Fix" *(san ding)* Policy in March 1955, the state reacted to the dissatisfaction of the peasantry by creating the purchasing policy. Three-Fix meant that the levels of production, purchasing, and sales would be fixed for three years. Consequently, peasants would be able to increase production without having their taxes and quotas increased as well. The procurement rate of grain production decreased from 30.6 percent in 1954 to 27.6 percent in 1955 (see table 1.1). In 1956 and 1957, it was even lower. The party leadership may have felt that since the state had already made a contribution to the peasants, the peasants should be responsible for fulfilling the grain quotas. In the summer of 1955, the Socialist "high tide" in the countryside also took place, and the CCP began a campaign for collectivization. The euphoria caused by the successful enforcement of collectivization in a short period of time allowed Mao to conclude that the grain problem in the countryside was not serious and to believe that landlords and counterrevolutionaries were complaining in order to attack the CCP.[64]

In 1955, the media reported frequently on falsely declared "lack of grain households" and peasants who pretended to be hungry in order to get relief from the state. In June, the *People's Daily* reported that in Jiangsu Province claims that the grain supply was falling short were false.[65] In reality, some areas and households were indeed short of grain due to the most serious flood in Jiangsu's history the previous year. In

the disaster areas, the state would purchase less grain or none at all, and relief was distributed as well. The article explained that the false claims of shortages throughout the entire province were a result of both the ideological confusion of the peasants and the bad influence of landlords and rich peasants. In April, 66 percent of the population received a ration of 1 *jin* (500 grams) of grain per person per day, which, according to the author of the article, could hardly be called too little. Some peasants restricted themselves to gruel *(zhou)* instead of white rice because they were still afraid that the state would take more than it had promised, and the author labeled this behavior as conservative. Furthermore, local cadres who had handed over relief grain to peasants without undertaking a serious investigation of whether or not there was a real need were criticized.[66] During the purchase period between February and May 1954, "incidents" in which the masses demanded grain *(nao liangshi)* took place across the whole province. Counterrevolutionaries put pressure on peasants to join the protests with the slogan "He who does not participate has grain at home. We will just go to his home to eat." Despite the accusations, the author of the article still acknowledged that the supply was low for a number of reasons, including increased consumption on the part of the peasants after the land reform, the increases in the urban population, and the increase in the number of workers. The article is interesting because the accusation that peasants made false claims of grain shortages because of their ideological shortcomings became widespread during the Socialist Education Campaign in 1957. The party argued in 1955 that food shortages were local rather than widespread, and the peasants were told they could trust the state to set reasonable quotas because the government would take into account the damage caused by natural disasters. The party promised to prevent deadly famines in the aftermath of natural disasters, but at the same time it was afraid that peasants would use the fear of starvation to emphasize their own demands.

Another article in the *People's Daily* in July 1955 questioned whether the lack of grain was common, and it gave similar answers. Chen Yun was quoted as saying that the current daily adult consumption of 1 *jin* of processed grain on average would be sufficient and that peasants should not worry that they would have to give grain to the state.[67] The author of this article expressed the hope that the Three-Fix Policy would overcome this kind of mistrust, as the system of the united

purchase and sale of grain would help to prevent mass starvation and guarantee fair prices. In China, production output was severely unbalanced. While in some localities people would consume 1,000 *jin* of grain annually (1.39 kilograms a day), other places would provide a ration of only 200 *jin* a year (270 grams a day). Furthermore, the author continued, every year tens of millions of peasants who were affected by natural disasters and several tens of millions of peasants who lacked grain would require support and relief. Against this background, a reasonable distribution system would be necessary to prevent more hunger. To help convince readers that China should take the Socialist road to development, the article appealed to them to show solidarity with those in the disaster areas.

At the beginning of my research, I wanted to determine what quantity of grain the state defined as an adequate ration for peasants. As far as I know, the central government never specifically made a decision of this kind, although one *jin* per day on average was mentioned as a reasonable rural ration several times in the mid-1950s.[68] According to *Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China*, in June 1954, a decision of the Central Committee calculated the sale of grain in the countryside on the basis of 30 *jin* per month per person, or a little less than one *jin* per day.[69] The minister of grain, Chen Guodong, said in 1959 that the rural ration of 1955 had been calculated at 417 *jin* of raw grain per year, or around 1.14 *jin* per day. In 1959, the rural rations were 440 *jin* per year (1.2 *jin* per day).[70] This amount might also include some other, lower-quality grains, not just wheat and rice. For the population as a whole, the calculated ration was only slightly more. In March 1957, Li Xiannian mentioned an annual ration of 500 *jin* per person, or around 1.3 *jin* a day.[71]

Since the beginning of urban rationing in 1955, the central government never officially defined either a standard level of consumption that constituted a full meal or the peasants' rights to a certain ration. As noted, only a reasonable minimum level of rural consumption was mentioned, defined as approximately one *jin*. The rural population had no entitlement to rations, the one *jin* being only an estimate for purposes of state planning and recommendation of how much peasants should eat. However, it was no easy task to curb rural consumption. In September 1956, the Central Committee and the State Council complained that sales of grain in the cities were constant, but consumption

in the countryside had increased alarmingly. In July and August, the sale of grain had increased by 1.27 million tons, as compared to the previous year.[72] In March 1959, the Central Committee circulated a report of the provincial government of Henan about mass food disturbances in Xinxiang County. The report asserted that only 10 percent of the protesters were from "true lack of grain households" *(zhen quelianghu)* while 90 percent had ideological problems.[73] It seems that without a political campaign and pressure the rural population could not be convinced to eat less.

THE TURNING POINT: THE SOCIALIST EDUCATION CAMPAIGN AND THE POLITICIZATION OF HUNGER

During the summer of 1957, the CCP launched the Anti-Rightist Campaign to crack down on intellectual dissent. On August 8, the Socialist Education Campaign began, and the entire rural population was integrated into the anti-rightist struggle. This campaign aimed to attack the resistance against both collectivization and the grain policies, and it can be considered an important turning point in the relations between the state and the peasants.[74]

In 1957, provinces such as Hebei, Henan, and Shandong were struck by natural disasters. As a result of these events and peasant resistance, the state could not fulfill its grain quotas. Grievances over hunger were widespread in the countryside. Before the Socialist Education Campaign, *Neibu Cankao* had published many of these grievances without a political comment or evaluation. In January 1957, the agriculture and trade section of the *People's Daily* received many letters from readers who complained about the bitterness of peasant life and about hunger. The majority of these letters came from the provinces of Henan and Hebei and were written not by peasants but by cadres and workers. For example, a delegate from a factory in Shanghai reported, upon returning from a trip to his home village in Hebei, that the peasants were afraid the road to collectivization would be paved with hunger.[75] The cooperatives gave only thirty *jin* of grain per month to their members. The cadres did not care whether people lived or died. The peasants said that they had only three choices: to run to the cities, to organize food for themselves, or to wait until they starved to death. One peasant said that the situation was even worse than it had been in the old society

because the Republican government at least sent aid during a natural disaster in 1917. A soldier from Zhejiang Province pointed out that the peasants did not understand the grain procurement policy because it meant that the government exported grain to Russia while the Chinese people did not have enough to eat. In Henan Province, peasants even made up a sarcastic jingle: "Chairman Mao is really good, everyone is hungry" *(Mao zhuxi zhen shi hao, renren chi bu bao)*.

With the beginning of the Socialist Education Campaign, complaints about the agricultural cooperatives and state purchasing policies became an issue of socialism versus capitalism. An article in the *People's Daily* in August issued a warning that every village cadre and peasant should fulfill 100 percent of the grain quotas. The strict control of consumption and saving grain were seen as indications of whether one was walking the Socialist road or not and whether one loved one's country or not.[76] The author of the article asked how the urban population, the army, and people in disaster areas would be fed if the quotas were not met. As a consequence, the question of whether or not the peasants had enough to eat became highly political. The *People's Daily* declared that the grain problem was really an ideological concern. As an example, one of its articles criticized the peasants of You County in Hunan Province for complaining that 800–900 *jin* of sorghum per year was not enough.[77] According to the article, except for a small minority who really did not have enough to eat, the peasants pretended to lack grain out of selfish interests. Furthermore, cadres in the villages and cooperatives were driven by a selfish departmentalism and helped the peasants to hide grain. For instance, after the education of the grassroots cadres in Cang County in Hebei Province, over one hundred thousand *jin* of hidden grain were found. These kinds of reports regarding false complaints about hunger were widely published in journals such as *Liangshi* (Grain), *Nongcun Gongzuo* (Political Work in the Villages), *Bayi Zazhi* (Journal of August 1; the periodical of the PLA), and *Neibu Cankao*. The party established a standard narrative based on these complaints. Forms of peasant resistance, such as concealing production and private distribution, "to divide more, record less" *(duofen, shaobao)*, "to report less, take more" *(shaobao, duona)*, and "false screams" *(jiahan)*, were disparaged and attacked.

During the Socialist Education Campaign, party officials forced peasants and cadres to undertake self-criticism if they were accused

of pretending to be hungry. A report about the "great debate" in the Anle cooperative in Anhui Province shows how the state tried to stop the complaints of poor nutrition. During the debate, "bad elements" claimed that the grain rations were lower than they had been before liberation and that the peasants did not have enough to eat because of state grain procurements and the collectivization of agriculture.[78] The cadres organized "speaking bitterness" sessions to educate and encourage the peasants to remember how much worse the situation had been before 1949. At these sessions, poor and middle-level peasants described their bitter life under the rule of the landlords. They also blamed themselves for their demands for more grain: "If everyone were like us, the workers, the army, and the soldiers would have hungry stomachs."[79] The report argued that the grain ration could not be improved that year.

FAMINE AID AND THE DEMANDS OF THE PEASANTS

The Anti-Rightist Campaign had a great impact on the procurement policies of the state because the minister for industry and grain, Cao Naiqi, was labeled a rightist. The new leadership of the grain bureau stated: "We will definitely not withdraw our forces until complete victory" *(bu huo quansheng, jue bu shoubing)*.[80] This saying became the motto of the Anti-Rightist Campaign on the grain front. As a result, even provinces afflicted by disasters, such as Shandong, had to fulfill their grain quotas.

The discourse during the Socialist Education Campaign shows how the government tried to curb the demands of the peasants in disaster areas. The state did not fully repudiate its responsibility to help those living in disaster areas, but it pointed out that these areas must enforce the principle of "producing to provide relief for oneself." According to this line of thinking, villagers should tighten their belts before requesting food aid from the state. For example, a report about Shandong in *Liangshi* noted that youth dissatisfaction had caused difficulties for the state when it had informed peasants that their grain rations were being cut back to six hundred grams per day. The author argued that six hundred grams per day, supplemented with some vegetables, was enough to survive on. In Dingtao County the peasants were not accustomed to eating wild plants, but the chairman of the Bureau for Commerce and Trade himself organized them to pick wild plants in

the fields and to change their habits.[81] The article emphasized that the government should provide aid for disaster areas but that grain should not be supplied to the peasants needlessly, as the supply situation was difficult.

In an instruction delivered on October 18, 1957, the party committee of Shandong Province warned that peasants would freeze, starve to death, or run away if the political work of the party did not raise awareness regarding "producing to provide relief for oneself" and reducing grain rations.[82] The provincial newspaper *Dazhong Ribao* (Masses Daily) argued that it was possible to fulfill the quotas in light of the victory in the two-pronged struggle between Socialist and capitalist elements. According to it, the grain question should be the focus of political education in the Socialist Education Campaign.[83]

The Chinese government expected that the peasants and local cadres would trust it to establish reasonable grain quotas. An article in *Liangshi* acknowledged mistakes in the past, especially in 1954–1955, but blamed them on local cadres, claiming it was their fault that peasants had not had enough to eat. The article also noted that in three counties in Guangxi Province over three hundred people had starved to death. According to this article, everyone knew that the government took such mistakes very seriously but that the "boundless ocean" of small and unstable peasant production was hard to control. Furthermore, the state lacked experience in grain purchasing. As a result, the problem of "surpassing the quotas" was unavoidable.[84] In one incident of starvation *(e'si shijian)* in Guangxi, the provincial, district, and county governments took disciplinary action against the responsible cadres. The author asked rhetorically: "Did any dynasty in history ever protect the interests of the peasants with such strict concern?"

As mentioned above, the CCP was concerned that fears of starvation might drive the peasants to emphasize their own needs, even though the party had promised to prevent famines associated with natural disasters. The chairman of the grain bureau of Shanxi Province criticized local cadres who were afraid to cut grain rations in famine-afflicted areas because the peasants might make trouble or withdraw from the collectives. The local cadres argued: "If a [situation such as the] Guangxi incident occurs, then the higher authorities will be responsible."[85] The party felt that villagers could extort grain from state reserves by pleading imminent famine. It was not easy for the state to accurately gauge the seriousness of the supply situation.

The *People's Daily* published an article to disprove the accusation of the "rightists" that the government would not organize famine relief in the case of natural disasters. Quoting the numbers from Deng Tuo's *The History of Famine Relief in China*, the author argued that over 18 million people would have died under Republican rule between 1920 and 1936.[86] In contrast to the GMD, the government of the CCP took relief seriously, and despite terrible natural disasters after 1949, only a small number of people had died. According to the article, 15,551 people died as a result of natural disasters in 1954 and 10,678 in 1956, most of them in floods. Only 44 people starved to death in 1954 and 578 in 1956, whereas under the GMD millions would have died. The author argued that the people's government would make great efforts to keep its promise that nobody should starve to death; if the disaster areas were unable to "save themselves by producing," the central government would send relief. In the eight years after the founding of the new state, the central government had provided 1.29 billion yuan in relief loans. The article quoted the decision of the government to put an end to floods, droughts, and insect damage within seven to twelve years. The article shows that the people who starved to death were counted and that it was still possible to address the issues. However, the statement that the central government would send no famine relief became politically taboo.

To sum up, three years before the Great Leap famine, it is very striking that the government regarded three hundred deaths in Guangxi as a serious problem and punished the responsible cadres. Despite the ongoing Anti-Rightist Campaign, the government was still able to talk about the famine in Guangxi in 1956.[87] The topics of hunger and famine became highly politicized in 1957. However, the internal news system was still functioning better than during the Great Leap Forward. In *Neibu Cankao*, we find more reports about starving peasants in 1957 than in the entire two-year period of 1959–1960.

PEASANT GRIEVANCES: STATE DISCRIMINATION AND FOOD AVAILABILITY IN RURAL CHINA

Another very important discourse during the Socialist Education Campaign focused on the disparity between the cities and the countryside. The topic of urban-rural inequality became current again in the autumn of 1957. In no other period of the Mao era did the party have

to justify the privileges of the cities in so many articles. The complaints of the villagers who came under attack by the party were largely concerned with hunger and food, and the question of "who feeds whom" played a very important role in CCP propaganda during the revolution. At that time, CCP propaganda held that the peasants should assume the reins of power because it was they who fed the landlords and rich peasants. The party insisted that the Red Army and, later, the PLA would not take any free food but, rather, would plant grain themselves. In 1957, the question of who feeds whom again came to the fore but in a very different way than it had before, as the party had to explain how it benefited the peasants to feed the cities and cadres. Once again, discourses on social injustice were riddled with food and hunger metaphors.

The reports in *Neibu Cankao* demonstrate that peasants and rural cadres were deeply dissatisfied with the preference the grain supply system showed toward the workers. Even after Mao's harsh attack on Liang Shuming in 1953, complaints about discrimination against the peasants continued to be widespread, although few intellectuals who spoke up during the Hundred Flower Campaign made the peasant question a central feature of their discourse, and only a few low-ranking intellectuals raised their voices on behalf of the peasants.

One of the most interesting documents concerns a program developed by four students from the Institute for Agriculture of the Southwest; it was reprinted without comment in *Neibu Cankao* in June 1957 during the Anti-Rightist Campaign. The four students requested that both the central government and Mao Zedong acknowledge the revolutionary character of the peasants. They criticized the characterization of peasants as selfish and backward and the celebration of the workers as the most revolutionary class; on the contrary, they considered the peasants to be the most revolutionary class in China.[88] The peasants had tightened their belts in the interests of Socialist development, consuming less rice and meat than the workers, and the students demanded to know why the workers should eat better than the peasants. Given this situation, they argued, the peasants should have the right to found their own political party. The students also criticized the idea that the migration of peasants to the cities would burden the worker-peasant alliance because its motivation was the great gap in the standard of living between city and countryside. The students called for higher prices for

agricultural products, expanded plots of land for private use, reduced rice exports, an increase in rural grain rations, cadre participation in manual labor, practical agricultural production lessons in the agricultural institutes, and the sending of high-ranking cadres to the countryside so that they might understand the real situation.[89]

I do not know whether these students were arrested or what happened to them. Nothing is known about their family backgrounds. Their program questioned orthodox Marxism-Leninism and emphasized the fact that the peasants were the real and primary force of the Chinese revolution, even if the CCP later credited the cities and the workers with this honor. The students were not contesting the historical arguments; rather, they were contesting the idea that the peasants should go hungry to save resources for Socialist development while the workers did not. Some of their demands were Maoist in nature (e.g., that cadres should participate in manual labor). The idea of an independent peasant party or organization, however, differed radically from the notions of the government. In the context of the Anti-Rightist Campaign, the Chinese government treated demands for increased grain rations and grain prices as a form of sabotage of industrial development.

While these four students merely made suggestions to the central government, one thousand students from middle schools attacked the county government in Hanyang in Hubei Province on June 12, 1957.[90] In this violent riot, thirteen cadres and twenty-six students were injured. The majority of protesters were of peasant origin, and the most violent rioter was the son of a worker with a poor peasant family background.[91] The discrimination that rural students faced in the selection process for the universities played an important role here; during their demonstration in front of the government buildings, students shouted slogans such as "Abolish the difference between countryside and city in student selection" and "Standardize the selection process nationwide." The county government explained that counterrevolutionary forces had misused student grievances.

It was not only students with peasant origins who felt that the economic system was unfair but also village-level cadres. During the Socialist Education Campaign criticism of discrimination against the rural population itself came under attack. In *Neibu Cankao* critical reports of such "counterrevolutionary" views were published with increasing frequency. Grievances pertaining to the privileges of the workers,

especially with regard to the food supply system, were now not only published for the purposes of documentation but also as examples of political incorrectness.

A report regarding cadre conferences in Hubei Province criticized rural cadres who supported incorrect and reactionary opinions during the "great debate." The cadres demanded the abolition of state-purchased grain, pointing out that the Soviet Union had already abolished the system.[92] The report accused local cadres of resorting to empty excuses to argue for the downsizing of the grain quotas. One village official said that the CCP should abolish state grain purchasing so that the peasants would have enough to eat. In some regions, the cadres demanded the government raise the grain ration to eight hundred or even one thousand *jin* per person per year. One village official warned: "If the grain ration does not rise, the masses will make trouble, and I will lead it." A cadre of the women's association complained that the pigs had more to eat than the people did.

And so the preferential treatment of the cities was called into question. Some people argued that the grain, oil, and meat policies of the state made it clear that the party favored the cities and workers and that it treated the countryside and the peasants unfairly *(kuidai nongcun he nongmin)*.[93] A cadre said: "Industrial products are expensive, but agricultural products are cheap. Workers get a fixed salary per month, but peasants suffer every day. The workers and cadres enjoy all the fruits of production. The Communist Party just takes care of the cities and workers and does not care about the countryside and the peasants at all." Another cadre pointed out that soldiers were allocated more cloth than other people, while a village official made a remark reminiscent of Liang Shuming's 1953 criticism: "Life in the cities is like paradise [while] life in the villages is like hell. The peasants are not human beings."[94]

The Hubei report demonstrates that some rural cadres did speak up for the interests of the countryside; though they had privileges, they saw themselves as part of the villages and as victims of the state policies of urban preference. The cadres were under pressure from both sides, the state and the peasants, because they had to execute the unpopular grain policies in the villages.

Peasants launched a similar criticism of the dual society. In *Neibu Cankao* a journalist wrote about the "great debate" in an agricultural

cooperative in Qingpu City. During the debate, old peasants complained that 520 *jin* of grain per year was not enough to live on. The workers in the city got a ration of 40–50 *jin* per month. When supply was tight, the peasants noted, the workers could buy steamed dumplings. In contrast, the villagers had no money to pay for extra food. The peasants could depend only on the supply provided by the cooperative.[95] An older upper-middle-level peasant argued that while workers received 700 *jin* of grain per year for eight hours of work, peasants had to work from dusk until dawn. A lower-middle-level peasant even attacked the PRC's entire social security system, questioning why the workers should enjoy health insurance and other social services, eat in public dining halls, and live in Western-style houses *(yangfang)* when the peasants worked much harder and their health was dependent on the weather as they had to work outside in the fields.[96] A peasant woman complained that the situation of peasant women was even worse than that of women who cleaned the toilets in the streets of cities because the latter got a salary of twenty yuan per month and had warm clothes and enough to eat. An older, poor middle-level peasant remarked that he pitied young rural men as all of the girls left the villages to look for husbands in the cities, wanting to marry a worker or someone with a cadre background.

Some peasants went beyond complaining and started planning resistance. One rich middle-level peasant argued that the historical foundations of the CCP did not represent the interests of the peasants because it was easier for the workers to unite, and he questioned how the workers could lead the country if the peasants refused to sell grain for three years.[97] Based on the experience of the Taiping Rebellion, he warned that a revolution would fail without the support of the peasantry. He also pointed out that after liberation, Mao Zedong had moved to Beijing and become a high-ranking bureaucrat, the implication being that Mao could no longer speak as a representative of the peasantry.

THE PARTY COUNTERATTACKS AND ESTABLISHES NEW TABOOS ON FOOD AND HUNGER

Despite the high degree of control in the CCP's discourses, peasants found unregulated discursive space and took advantage of it. In early 1957, most villagers and city dwellers knew they could not criticize the

CCP's agricultural policies because they would be accused of supporting free trade and a market economy. Nor could they reject state grain purchasing without being accused of resisting industrialization. The only possible way for peasants not to be excluded from the Socialist discourse was to express their criticisms in terms of hunger, but by the summer of 1957, the party leadership felt that this argument too had become dangerous. Discourses launched during the Socialist Education Campaign demonstrate how criticism of urban-rural disparity in terms of food could result in a questioning of party rule. Questioning who feeds whom and with an emphasis on social injustice, villagers and students attacked the legitimacy of the CCP. Consequently, the party leadership came to the conclusion that this narrative had to be excluded from the Socialist discourse, and it did that by defining criticism of urban privileges as false and wrong. In the tone of its articles, the CCP attempted to establish the "truth" that it did not favor the cities over the countryside.

Typically, these articles do not mention names, instead using phrases such as "the rightists said. . . ." The authors make it clear that criticisms of urban privilege are taboo and that rightists could not in any way speak for the peasants. These articles, which are ideological in nature, use statistics to try to prove that certain opinions are wrong and, in fact, are propaganda created by the enemy. For example, one article, based on an investigation conducted in the city of Baoding in Hebei Province and its rural environs, reports that the income of the workers is twice as high as that of the peasants. However, it explains that these figures mean little because living expenses are much higher in the city. If no natural disasters occurred, the road to collectivization would enable village living standards to catch up with city living standards.[98]

During the Socialist Education Campaign, *Bayi Zazhi* published an entire series under the title "Fair or Not." The "fair or not" question is raised in an article written by the political commissar of Shao School, who said that the CCP favored the workers and despised the peasants *(hou gong bonong)*. This article served as a negative model and was continuously criticized.

As a result of the politicization of the situation in the countryside, dissenting opinions quickly came under attack. During the Socialist Education Campaign the following statements became taboo, and persons who made them could be criticized or arrested:

The life of the peasants is bitter.
The life of the peasants has not improved.
Collectivization has been implemented in a bad way.
Collectivization has no advantages.
The peasants do not have enough to eat.
The workers live in heaven while the peasants live in hell.
Grain prices are too low.
Grain quotas are too high.

Clearly, the CCP was encountering strong opposition to its agrarian policies, especially to its grain policy. If this were not the case, the press would not have published so many articles that attempted to justify party policies.

With regard to meeting the goals of the Socialist Education Campaign, the CCP was quite successful. It cracked down on peasant resistance to collectivization and halted the retreat of peasants from the collectives. Indeed, it was at this point that the peasants lost the option of leaving the Socialist economy.[99] As a result of these measures, the agricultural cooperatives were stabilized and peasant resistance was forced to assume hidden forms. At the end of 1957, 98 percent of Chinese peasants were organized into Socialist collectives, and the crisis of state grain purchasing was solved. In the middle of November 1957, 76 percent of the grain quota of the period between 1957 and 1958 had already been filled.[100] In February 1958, the Central Committee declared that results of the purchasing and control of sales were much better than at the beginning of 1957. As a result of the reduction of sales in the countryside, grain disturbances occurred in some places. Most complaints about lack of grain were false. The central government emphasized that the grain question should be the focus of Socialist education and had to be considered as part of the struggle between socialism and capitalism.[101]

Despite the apparent success of collectivization, however, the Socialist Education Campaign resulted in serious long-term problems. Scholars such as Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun note the important relationship between the Anti-Rightist Campaign and the development of the Great Leap Forward.[102] When famine broke out in 1959, most people were afraid to speak the truth and thereby risk being labeled as rightist opportunists. As has now been well documented, the problem of false reporting from below made it difficult for the central government to

determine how serious the situation really was. Despite the CCP's denials of the injustice inherent in the dual society (and its harsh crackdown on its critics), by the end of the Socialist Education Campaign the party leadership may well have felt that it could no longer ignore some of the arguments put forward by peasants and intellectuals. Pressures internal to China, therefore, may have contributed to the fact that in 1957 Mao began to question the Soviet style of socialism.

NEW FOOD MANAGEMENT UNDER THE PUBLIC DINING HALLS

In spite of the widespread propaganda during the Socialist Education Campaign, the government was still realistic enough to understand that the country's food problem had not been solved. During the late summer of 1957, Chen Yun declared that it would be extremely costly in terms of both effort and time to solve the grain problem in general, as the peasants would keep more and sell less to the state. The amount of grain in the stocks dwindled perilously, and natural disasters occurred twice in four years.[103] The bumper harvests in the spring and autumn of 1958 changed everything, however. Production increased, and many reports about the so-called "sputnik fields" *(weixing tian)* were drastically overexaggerated. (The term "sputnik" was meant to suggest that the Chinese would establish records in grain production just as the Soviets had done in the cosmos with their satellite.) As a result, for the first time since the foundation of the PRC, the government declared the grain problem solved.

The program of the Great Leap Forward in the autumn of 1958 can be seen both as an escape from the legitimacy crisis and as a New Deal for the rural society. In the utopian mood of the time, new discourses on food and urban-rural disparity were established. Instead of defending the status quo, the party propaganda focused on the promises of a new rural life under the system of the People's Communes. The newly established communes were intended to unify industry, agriculture, trade, schools, and the military. Abolishing the differences between cities and the countryside, manual and intellectual work, and workers and peasants was a key slogan of the Great Leap.[104] As a result of the steel campaign, peasants became workers, and the intellectuals were to be "peasantized" *(zhishifenzi nongminhua)*. The communes promised

to bring the welfare state to the villages. It was believed that every commune should establish child-care centers and nursing homes. Model communes in Henan, Hebei, and Shandong Provinces introduced a free supply system for the peasants, by which some of their members were guaranteed free food, clothing, medical care (including pre- and post-natal care), education, housing, and marriage and funeral ceremonies.[105] The Ministry of Civil Affairs, which was in charge of disaster relief, took the relief effort less seriously than before. It was believed that thanks to the People's Communes no one would starve to death. Instead of focusing on relief, the ministry started to give more attention to expanding the institution of the communes such as kindergartens and old people's homes. In most cases the plans proved to be unrealistic.[106]

During the autumn of 1958, the party press questioned whether the system of distribution according to work performance *(an lao fenpei)* should be replaced by distribution according to need *(an xu fenpei)*. The *People's Daily* reported that the villages in Henan Province already combined the grain supply with a wage system. The new distribution system would guarantee an "iron rice bowl" (life-long job security and social welfare) for the peasants and would save time because it abolished the interminable discussions attempting to define work points and work performance.[107] The leader of the province and radical leftist Wu Zhipu demanded a step-by-step introduction of wages for peasants, similar to those for urban workers.[108] The supply and welfare privileges of city dwellers had been important factors contributing to the widespread dissatisfaction that was felt by the peasants in 1957. Now the state promised a new equality for those who resided in the countryside.

During the peak of the Great Leap in 1958, the party gave a new answer to the grain problem and to the question of who feeds whom. With the introduction of public mess halls, the state promised to abolish hunger immediately. The public mess halls took over the management of food and, in some places at the beginning of the Great Leap, instituted an "all you can eat" policy. Mao Zedong used a food metaphor to describe communism: "Eating for free is communism."[109] After a reported bumper harvest in the summer of 1958, the state established a new argument about the saving of grain, although the discourse about the "wasting" of grain did not disappear from the public press totally. The party press hailed the saving of grain, labor, and wood as advantages

the public mess halls presented over cooking at home.[110] The question of dining hall waste, however, remains a controversial topic in Western research today.[111] In my view, waste in the dining halls and the corruption of cadres are important to an understanding of the different death rates in villages. However, the dining halls decided about the distribution of food inside the villages only. In order to understand the famine, we should look at the whole system of grain supply and distribution in the urban and rural society.

Only a few articles referred to the debate on grain supply and distribution during the Socialist Education Campaign. An article in the *People's Daily* about the investigation of a People's Commune presented a new direction in the narrative that the grain problem was an ideological one; to wit: during the summer "rotten elements" had slacked off while working *(moyanggong)* and complained that they did have not enough to eat; one such troublemaker was arrested by state security. As the new narrative related, after the party established the public dining halls, the political consciousness of the peasants improved, and everybody was convinced of the advantages of the new style of life.[112] The public dining halls were presented as the solution to the "grain problem as an ideological problem." Furthermore, the party leadership saw the public dining halls as a key to transforming the ownership structure. An article in the journal *Red Flag* stated that after the public dining halls were established, private garden plots and privately owned pigs became useless, as these dining halls would nourish all citizens.[113] Because the public dining halls stored all of the grain for the private households, peasants became dependent on the supply of the communes. This development had serious consequences during the famine that followed.

After the foundation of the PRC in 1949, the issue of hunger was heavily politicized. In the 1950s the country was struck by several serious natural disasters. The CCP felt that the legitimacy of the revolutionary regime was closely linked to the prevention of deadly famine, and the government of New China promised the people that nobody would starve to death. In the early 1950s, the CCP made huge efforts to build up a granary system, to organize famine relief, and to balance the regional differences and instabilities of grain production. However, the central government did not have the resources to provide relief for

all disaster victims. As a result, local governments were called upon to restore production for relief purposes, as well as to prevent peasants' escaping from the disaster areas. From its very inception the relief system of the PRC was highly dependent on efficient actions on the part of the local and provincial governments.

In 1953, the leadership believed that only the introduction of a unified system of purchasing and sales could solve the problem of feeding the rapidly increasing urban population. Consequently, the private grain trade was abolished. Soon after, the state met resistance from the peasants against selling their "surplus" grain. In the supply crises in 1953 and 1955, the party leadership around Mao Zedong had already begun to believe that peasants were feigning hunger or falsely reporting themselves as "lack of grain households" in order to get relief. They assumed that hunger was a local problem, not a more widespread one. The government was willing to help victims of natural disasters, but it was worried that peasants would overestimate damages. Local cadres were instructed to strictly investigate whether claims of hunger were based on fact. In the early 1950s, the CCP still considered feigning hunger or "wasting grain" more a matter of political education than one of criminal intent.

In the 1950s, nutrition in many of the western and northern provinces in China was very poor and might have been indicative of famine according to the standards of wealthier countries. However, in China peasants were used to living on low rations, and the state provided only the urban population with the right to food. Urban rationing was introduced in 1953 and in 1955 as a national, unified system, but the state never issued ration cards to the rural population. Consequently, conflicts between peasants and the state arose around the question of what constituted enough food. During the mid-1950s, the official media tried to establish the idea that five hundred grams daily per person was reasonable for the rural population. Internal reports show that this proposal was widely rejected in the countryside. On the one hand, peasants used hunger to make claims to the state. On the other hand, the government made appeals to the people that they should save grain and prevent waste because millions of disaster victims required help every year. Furthermore, the increasing urban population had to be fed. As a result, demands for food above and beyond the defined standards were considered selfish and unpatriotic. The CCP launched moralizing

campaigns in the cities and countryside to control the sale and consumption of grain. Both state and peasants used hunger as an argument to emphasize their interests.

In the early and mid-1950s, the conflict about food did not result in widespread death from starvation because the government still was able to maintain a balance between the needs of the provinces and its overall purchase and sales requirements. Despite accusations of feigned hunger, the government was well aware that the grain problem was far from being solved. With the introduction of the Three-fix Policy in 1955, the CCP was able to react to peasant resistance and make compromises. The Socialist Education Campaign in 1957, however, resulted in an escalation of existing conflicts. In the context of the adoption of the Anti-Rightist Campaign in the countryside, the grain problem was viewed more and more as an ideological one. Statements such as "The peasants are hungry," "Grain prices are too low," and "The central government does not send famine relief" were attacked in the media and became taboo.

4 Preventing Urban Famine by Starving the Countryside (1959–1962)

BEGINNING IN THE WINTER OF 1958, the Chinese government acknowledged the failure of the radical agenda of the Great Leap and tried to enforce a more moderate version, with Mao Zedong personally directing the readjustment *(zhengdun)* campaign. The utopian heyday was over. In the spring of 1959 local famines occurred in several places in China, and the leadership also became aware that many reports of bumper harvests in 1958 had been false. This chapter will show how the government dealt with shortages and hunger during the peak of the famine. My goal is not to reconstruct Chinese elite politics during the Great Leap in detail but to show the impact of government decisions regarding food supply on the development of the famine between 1959 and 1962. The chapter begins with the attitudes of the leadership regarding the underreporting of production by peasants and local cadres; during this period the narrative that peasants were feigning hunger contributed to violent campaigns to search for hidden grain. Next, it will analyze why and how the CCP decided to cut rural and urban rations at a time of no urban grain stocks, and it will analyze the failure to transfer grain from the countryside. I will argue that the government did not ignore the rural famine but launched several policies to prevent its turning into an urban one, and I shall also explore how it succeeded in preventing massive urban unrest. Finally, I will present arguments

about how the famine ended. One important factor was the decision to import grain in late 1960. As a result, the peasants' burden to feed the cities was immediately reduced. The government also came to the conclusion that the uncontrolled growth of the urban population was one factor contributing to the famine. I will argue that the question of imports was closely linked with the sending of 20 million people to the countryside and linked also to the restoration of private plots. I will explain why the reforms of the People's Communes and the increase of agricultural production alone cannot explain the end of the famine but that we must also consider that the CCP had to readjust the entirety of rural-urban relations along with the system of food supply.

FROM READJUSTMENT OF THE GREAT LEAP TO VIOLENT CAMPAIGNS AGAINST HIDING GRAIN

In the winter of 1958, serious food problems occurred in some regions of China, although not yet of an extent amounting to a national crisis. Because the urban population and non-agricultural workforce had increased at the height of the Leap in 1958, the government was under pressure to purchase more grain, yet at the same time, it believed that relations with the peasants had to be readjusted. For the period of readjustment from late 1958 to June 1959, many documents regarding underreporting of grain by local cadres and peasants can be found, such as a report circulated on January 22, 1959, by the Central Committee regarding Guantao County in Shandong Province. After the public dining halls stopped distributing food, peasants began to emigrate from the province, and the leadership believed a combination of natural disasters and exaggerated reports on production was to blame. Overreporting by local cadres, as well as an unjustified struggle against underreporting *(fan manchan)*, were factors contributing to the shortage. Local cadres were admonished to report production results correctly and take the harvesting very seriously.[1] In this same month some reports of hunger were published in *Neibu Cankao*, presenting different messages. A report from the autonomous districts of the Buyi and Miao ethnic minorities in Guizhou Province said that peasants in People's Communes were already eating grain from the stocks of the state to cope with the shortage. As the cause for the shortage, the report blamed the lack of planning and reasonable rationing of grain,

which had caused enormous waste.[2] Several reports in *Neibu Cankao* pointed to underreporting and also waste consequent to the establishment of the public dining halls as causes. For example, one report said that 60–70 percent of all cadres in Huangpi County in Hubei Province underreported production. If, on the one hand, local cadres were criticized from above for underreporting, they were, on the other hand, protected by the masses, who criticized anyone who did not join them. After the bumper harvest of 1958, waste was endemic. Before the establishment of the public dining halls, peasants were content with a meal of half a bowl of rice and some soup, but now two bowls of steamed rice (400 grams per bowl) and one bowl of soup could be considered insufficient for a full meal.[3] Furthermore, an investigative report by the provincial government of Guangdong Province attacked the "no grain theory" *(wu liangshi lun)*, asserting that the claim that there was no grain in the Jiangmen district was false and that "concealing production and private distribution" of available provisions was widespread. Local cadres failed to explain the reduction of meals from three to two daily in some of the People's Communes, and this lack of information caused confusion and fear among the peasants.[4]

In contrast to such media reports, which bear a strong resemblance to the narrative of feigning hunger that was widespread in 1957, *Neibu Cankao* published letters from readers to the *People's Daily*. One reader reported running away from Shandong Province to Manchuria because the villagers did not have enough to eat. Another wrote that many peasants in a People's Commune in Henan Province were suffering from hunger-related edema.[5] Faced with these different messages of real and feigned hunger, leading cadres, probably from the grain department of the central government, explained in early February 1959 why around 10 percent of all production teams in the country would have a shortage of grain supply. This number was based on investigations in fourteen provinces. The term "shortage of supply" *(jinzhang)* could mean hunger or just restricted supply, and it was often used because it was unspecific and therefore less risky when it was unclear whether reports about hunger and famine would be welcomed from above. Ten percent was probably a great underestimate. According to the report, there were many causes for the shortage. For one thing, peasants consumed more after the summer of 1958 than before, amounting to an increase in consumption of about 10 percent of all grain production. In

addition, the increase of the workforce by around 10 million workers and of the urban population in general resulted in more consumption; however, an increase in the sale of grain in the cities was unavoidable in the context of the Great Leap Forward. Also, production teams were practicing the close planting of crops and kept more grain for reserves to prepare for the possibility of famine *(beihuang)*, with the seed grain amounting to around 10 percent of total production. Compounding the fact that natural disasters had affected 6 percent of the agricultural land, the harvest in the autumn of 1958 was badly collected. "Concealing production and private distribution" within the production groups led to difficulties, with some 10 percent of the 1958 harvest thus embezzled, and grain reserves that should have been stored in the public dining halls were in fact in the households of peasants. Some local cadres reacted too slowly to the shortage, thereby exacerbating it. The litany of problems is long, and the report argued that they could have been resolved with better administration and earlier measures for dealing with the shortage.[6] While it shows that problems were addressed, it is also quite clear that the general agenda of the Great Leap remained unquestioned. Incidentally, this report is one of the few that offers a percentage for underreporting for the country as a whole, as opposed to underreporting for individual areas.

On February 5, 1959, *Neibu Cankao* published an article on a campaign against underreporting *(fan manchan yundong)* in Guangdong Province, where Zhao Ziyang was party secretary. (He served as premier of the PRC in the 1980s and became the general secretary of the CCP in 1987.) The article asserted that reports of a grain shortage were false, and the provincial government claimed that due to the campaign local cadres reported 2.8 billion *jin* (1.4 million tons) of previously unreported "black" grain *(heiliang)*. Zhao Ziyang argued that local cadres had underreported production because they did not trust that the public dining halls would guarantee an adequate supply.[7] The critique was primarily directed at local cadres, but the document did not reveal what methods were used to find so much hidden grain in "black" stocks and in the homes of peasants, nor did it mention what results this campaign had on the nutrition of the peasants.

When the problems worsened in early 1959, the central government had to intervene. At the second Zhengzhou Conference of the Central Committee, held from February 27 to March 5, the government de-

cided to readjust the policies of the Great Leap. Mao even expressed an understanding for the peasant stratagem of underreporting production, acknowledging that the state had gone too far with the procurement rates and "egalitarianism."[8] What were the reasons for the frequent discussions of underreporting in early 1959? Did peasants and local cadres underreport more extensively under the relaxed controls and policy adjustments of late 1958 and early 1959 compared to the most intense period of the Great Leap in 1958? Did the journalists of the New China Agency report more on such everyday survival stratagems because they were less afraid of repression? It is also unclear why the provincial government of Guangdong launched a major campaign against underreporting even as the central government was about to institute new policies. The more moderate policy toward the peasants after the second Zhengzhou Conference did not extend to every region of China, however. During the spring of 1959, the provincial government of Henan under the leadership of the radical Wu Zhipu praised Dancheng County for a successful campaign against underreporting, and the resulting confiscation campaigns caused hunger in the eastern part of the province.[9] Despite provincial radicalism, between the winter of 1958 and the summer of 1959 (leading up to the campaign against the "rightist opportunists" following the Lushan Conference), hunger and local famines were topics that were possible to address within the internal information network of the party. In a letter to Premier Zhou Enlai in April 1959, Mao mentioned that 25,170,000 people were threatened with starvation, and he said that the party secretaries of fifteen provinces should be instructed that these people had to be saved in this temporary but alarming crisis.[10] Less is known about the particular actions that were taken.

At the Lushan Conference in the summer of 1959, Mao Zedong launched a campaign against "rightist opportunists" after the minister of defense, Peng Dehuai, criticized the policies of the Great Leap Forward. This development resulted in the end of rectification, and a "new" Great Leap starting in the late summer of 1959. The campaign against the "rightist opportunists" created intense political pressure and made it difficult to address hunger and the failure of state policies at every level of society. Famine as a topic became taboo not just for the media, but also within the internal information system of the party. The leaders around Mao Zedong at that point still had faith in the

overestimated grain production figures, and they arrived at the conclusion that quotas were not being fulfilled because peasants were underreporting production and hiding grain. Now the attack on the "rightist opportunists" became linked with local campaigns against "concealing production and private distribution." Unlike the Socialist Education Campaign of 1957, now there was no national media campaign by the central government criticizing peasants who feigned hunger, and it is not known whether the central government instructed local authorities to launch campaigns against underreporting. What we do know is that in several locations in China, such campaigns, albeit perhaps not organized by the central government, resulted in political terror and murder. Peasants and cadres were tortured or beaten, some even beaten to death. A bloody and violent campaign against underreporting in the autumn of 1959 is one cause that has been associated with the many deaths in the so-called Xinyang Incident, the official label for mass starvation that took place in Xinyang district in the south of Henan between the spring of 1959 and the winter of 1960. According to official figures, 1 million people died.[11] The district had only 10 million inhabitants before the outbreak of the famine. Like Henan Province, Xinyang had become famous as a model in China for the radical implementation of the Great Leap in 1958. After false reports of a record harvest, the state even purchased the peasants' grain rations and seed grain. The local government, which was supported by provincial leader Wu Zhipu, blockaded the region in an attempt to prevent anyone from leaving. In Guangshan County 526 cadres were arrested, and 2,241 people were beaten, of whom 105 died during the campaign against underreporting.[12] Similar incidents were also reported from counties in Sichuan, Liaoning, and Anhui Provinces.[13] There is no evidence that the central government instructed local cadres to use violent means to take the grain, although extraordinarily high purchase rates put local cadres under intense pressure to fulfill quotas, for if they were unable to meet the quotas, they would be labeled "rightist opportunists" and lose their jobs or even go to prison.

The escalation of violence in the villages can be understood against this historical background. Thaxton shows that the Japanese occupation and the civil war resulted in the brutalization of human relations and the creation of a legacy of warlike politics.[14] Furthermore, the violence can also be understood as a consequence of the narrative of

feigning hunger. For many years, peasants had been accused of feigning hunger and hiding grain in order to sabotage state grain procurements. While this accusation was sometimes unjustified, especially during the famine, underreporting and cheating the state seem to have been widespread practices in the countryside in 1956–1957.[15] The accusation provided an ideological justification to search for grain in peasants' homes, and in combination with a radical political atmosphere, it resulted in bloody violence against peasants and local cadres during the famine.

FEEDING THE URBAN POPULATION: EMPTY GRANARIES AND FAILURE OF GRAIN TRANSFERS FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE

Until recently most Western and Chinese scholars concerned with the famine have focused on its rural aspect. Less is known about the urban society during the Great Leap Forward.[16] However, I would argue that knowledge about the food supply of the urban population is important to an understanding of the rural famine. In December 1958, at the National Conference of the Bureau Chiefs of the Grain Offices, Vice–Prime Minister Li Xiannian gave a speech in which he expressed his concern regarding the increase of consumption in the countryside and the decreases in the grain reserves. He made a clear statement about responsibility: "The central government supervises the balance of the allocations. If the local administrations get more [grain] and sell less, they can retain the rest. Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Liaoning Provinces are under the unified management of the central government. If problems in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Liaoning occur, one can hold the Ministry of Food responsible. If problems such as starvation to death *[e'si]* or relief grain disturbances *[nao liang huang]* occur in other provinces, then each province is responsible."[17] Li made it clear that it was the responsibility of the provinces to provide information for realistic quotas for purchase and sale and clearly expressed the priorities set by the central government.[18] As I will show, the priority of maintaining the supplies in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Liaoning was mentioned several times in the documents of the central government.

In spite of the internal registration system, the increase in the Chinese urban population between 1958 and 1960 was unprecedented in

history. Between 1957 and 1960, the workforce in agriculture decreased by 33 million. The urban population increased during the same period by over 19.5 million, and the number of workers rose by over 25.8 million.[19] Most of these people had to be fed by the state and were entitled to higher rations than the rural population. As a result, grain had to be taken from the countryside. How was such an increase in the urban population possible? With a bumper harvest in 1958, the government considered the grain question resolved. The state paid less attention to storage efforts. Because the government believed during the utopian heyday in the autumn of 1958 that all new urban arrivals could be fed, it was not cautious about restraining migration to the cities or controlling the number of workers in the work units.[20] Furthermore, state enterprises were under enormous pressure to fulfill the high plan quotas of the Great Leap and needed to recruit more temporary workers. As early as January 1959, the Central Committee instructed the work units not to recruit new temporary workers.[21] In May, a plan followed to reduce the urban workforce by 8 million people because the "blind" (i.e., uncontrolled) rural migration to the cities would cause a shortage of labor in agriculture and goods in the cities were in short supply.[22] However, after the Lushan Conference and a new radicalization of the Great Leap, the urban workforce increased again, and it seems that the central government lost control over rural-urban migration in 1960.

Mass starvation initially occurred in rural China, but by the early spring of 1959 the cities were already facing supply problems. Li Xiannian reported that the urban grain reserves were lower than the government had expected. This development would have a serious impact on exports as well as on distribution in the cities.[23] During the time of the Lushan Conference in July, the grain reserves of several cities were almost fully depleted because of the increase in the urban workforce. For example, Shenyang and Dalian had reserves sufficient for only a few days.[24] Huge amounts of grain had to be transferred from the countryside. The tight supply of non-staple foods, especially vegetables, meat, and cooking oil, also became an issue during the conference. The Central Committee decided that the cities should develop their own non-staple food production in the suburbs and nearby countryside, and self-reliance in the production of vegetables was set as a goal.[25] It also made it clear that the production of non-staple food in the countryside should be expanded to support the cities and exports. It seems that

the reduction of the burden on the peasants was not a major aim of this policy. In cities in North China and even in Beijing, cabbage became an important part of the diet until the early 1980s because good-quality grain and meat were scarce and had to be supplemented with vegetables.

As the death rates in the villages rose in early 1960, the central government continued the policies of the Great Leap Forward without publicly acknowledging the famine. The decrease in grain production by 15 percent from 1958 to 1959 and a further decrease by 15.6 percent from 1959 to 1960 made it difficult to feed the urban population and the non-rural workforce.[26] In February 1960, Li Xiannian warned the Central Committee that the supplies in the granaries of Beijing, Tianjin, and Liaoning were low and called for the mobilization of the transport system to transfer grain to them from the rest of the country.[27] In April 1960, a report emphasized the priority of helping Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Liaoning, and other unspecified disaster areas.[28] Effective transport of the grain would depend on the army and its vehicles. The main provinces for grain purchase would be Sichuan, Inner Mongolia, and Heilongjiang. The Central Committee encouraged local cadres to take action against the underreporting of production, and peasants were advised not to increase their consumption after the harvest or to consume nine months' worth of food in six months. Waste and overconsumption—not hunger—were considered to be the primary problems.[29] These documents make no mention of starving peasants; even so, they clearly reflect the decision of the central government to protect the cities at the expense of the countryside.

Between 1959 and 1966, Zhou Enlai was in overall charge of grain work. During the Great Leap, he coordinated grain transfers and exports. In his official biography, published in the PRC, interesting details concerning the transfers in the summer of 1960 can be found. The central government estimated that 3.15 million tons had to be transported to Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Liaoning and used for exports. Fifty thousand tons had to be transferred to Tibet and Qinghai and 0.49 million tons to other provinces. This was the most ambitious grain transfer plan in the history of the PRC. However, the plan failed, and the amount of grain transferred was the lowest since the establishment of the system of unified purchase and sales.[30] According to his official biography, Zhou Enlai personally convinced the party secretaries

of Heilongjiang and Jiangxi Provinces to transfer more grain. To Yang Yicheng, the party secretary of Heilongjiang, Zhou said: "Heilongjiang has difficulties, but other provinces are worse. In many provinces many people have died. The government wants to organize grain to help [the people in those provinces]."[31] In Jiangxi, Zhou pressured the leaders to contribute 0.15 million tons of grain to help Shanxi, Shandong, Hebei, and Henan. In the official biography and several other publications, Zhou's actions are presented as patriotic, showing his concern for the well-being of the Chinese people; between June 1960 and September 1962, he is said to have had 115 conversations regarding the grain problem.[32] However, these publications do not emphasize that Zhou's major concern was the supply of the cities and the guarantee of exports. His actions during the crisis can hardly count as proof of his tireless commitment to the Chinese people.

In September 1960, the Central Committee realized that the ambitious plan for transferring grain from the countryside to the cities and other disaster areas could not be fulfilled. Sichuan could only meet 15 percent of the goal and provinces such as Zhejiang, Hubei, and Guizhou, around 10 percent. "In September in Shandong, Henan, and other disaster areas edema and irregular deaths *[fei zhengchang siwang]* occurred. The situation of rural migrants became serious. It became impossible to transfer grain to Beijing, Tianjing, Shanghai, and Liaoning."[33] The party leadership felt even more alarmed by the problem of urban supply than by rural famine. In an instruction to the party committees of the provinces, cities, and autonomous regions dated November 17, 1960, the situation with the granaries of Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin was described as very alarming. In November, less than 50 percent of the planned transfer of 1.2 million tons of grain from the provinces had been accomplished,[34] and the Central Committee called for immediate action to transfer 50,000 tons from Heilongjiang, Jilin, Inner Mongolia, Sichuan, Anhui, Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Hubei, and Hunan. Although peasants were starving in most provinces, the government also chose to transfer grain from major disaster areas such as Sichuan, Anhui, and Hunan. The provincial party secretaries were personally in charge of controlling the transfer on a daily basis. In this decision, relief for disaster areas was not mentioned. The Central Committee complained that the transfer of vegetable oil was also poorly organized.

The document emphasized that exports and sales in the cities should be guaranteed to take place on a timely basis.

The decisions of the Central Committee and the available statistics concerning the situation show clearly that the major concern of Zhou Enlai and his colleagues was to transfer the grain from the countryside to feed the major cities. Under Zhou's leadership, grain was transferred from Sichuan, one of the provinces hardest hit by the deadly famine. The party secretary of Sichuan, Li Jingquan, even mobilized 2 million people to transport grain out of the province.[35] How was it possible to mobilize so many people during the famine, and who were they? Clearly many were still fit to engage in transportation, while others were too hungry to move at all. Sichuan Province in particular had to pay a high price for these policies, and it was only in the spring of 1962 that the central government decided to send 125,000 tons of grain to Sichuan to end the suffering.[36]

In China, the amount of grain in the reserves has been treated as a national secret, but some numbers are now available, and we have learned that in some regions, peasants died even though the granaries were full. This is especially true for the region south of Henan where the terrible Xinyang Incident occurred.[37] The picture for China as a whole is different. During 1958–1959 and 1959–1960, the central government sold more grain than it purchased. The rapid increase of sales in the towns and cities, and at the same time in the countryside as well, accounts for this imbalance. Because the government did not want to import grain at that time, the grain from the reserves was used to balance the accounts. Based on the data, we can calculate that in 1958–1959 about 2.056 million tons more grain was sold than was purchased, and, unsurprisingly, the figure approximates the amount by which the reserves were reduced (see table 4.1). In 1959–1960, the grain sold exceeded the grain purchased by 2.31 million tons, and the amount stored in the granaries was reduced by about 2.31 million tons. It appears that during these years, the granaries were used to feed the increasing urban population and non-agricultural workers. The lowest amount of stored grain that was available since the introduction of the state monopoly of purchase and sales in 1953 was in 1959.[38] In September 1960, the situation grew worse still. The grain reserves of eighty-two large and mid-sized cities were only half those of the

Table 4.1. Purchase and Distribution of Grain, 1957–1962 (trade grain in tons)

		1957–1958	1958–1959	1959–1960	1960–1961	1961–1962
Purchases	Total	46,005,500	56,272,000	60,714,500	41,187,000	39,733,500
	Domestic purchases	46,005,500	56,272,000	60,714,500	39,042,000	33,957,000
	Imports	None	None	None	2,145,000	5,776,500
Distribution	Total	44,982,500	58,328,500	63,025,500	47,454,500	38,855,000
	Total domestic sales	42,104,500	52,600,500	55,956,500	44,348,500	36,816,000
	Sales in towns and cities	21,121,500	27,316,000	29,632,500	26,244,500	23,393,500
	Sales in the countryside	20,983,000	25,259,500	26,324,000	18,104,000	13,422,500
	Public distribution (for the army)	621,500	616,000	656,000	609,000	622,500
	Exports	2,084,000	3,628,000	4,325,500	1,196,000	877,500
	Spoilage and loss	172,500	1,484,000	2,087,500	1,301,000	539,000
Grain in the stocks (total)		19,220,500	17,164,000	14,853,000	8,585,500	9,464,000
Old grain in the stocks		14,584,000	10,857,000	7,591,500	5,469,500	6,515,000

Source: Yang Jisheng, *Mubei: Zhongguo liushi niandai dajihuang jishi* [Tombstone: A Record of the Chinese Famine in the Sixties] (Hong Kong: Tiandi, 2008), 2:853

Note: The numbers for 1957–1958 include the autumn harvest of 1957 and the summer harvest of 1958. "Public distribution" means grain for the army *(junliang)*. Dikötter compared the table in Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*, based on the 1962 numbers of the Grain Bureau of the central government, with statistics for Hunan Province for 1956–1961 that were estimated in 1965. The figures given for the grain output by the province were higher than those put out by the Grain Bureau. Dikötter believes that the Hunan statistics of 1965 were carefully researched and they would have been more reliable than those in 1962 during the aftermath of the famine. Frank Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*: *The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958–1962* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), 130–131. However, the table published by Yang Jisheng is the only one that gives data for the national level, and therefore I use it here.

previous year, and only 1.3 million tons were in the stocks.[39] This was only one-third the amount of a normal year.[40]

During 1960, the granaries near the lines of transportation became more and more empty, and in June, there was only enough saleable grain for seven days in the stocks of Beijing and for ten days in the stocks of Tianjin. In the ten cities of Liaoning Province, there was only enough for ten days, and the grain department of Shanghai exhausted its rice supply entirely.[41] It is astonishing that the central government did not lose its nerve and continued to reject the idea of importing grain to feed the urban population. In her global bestseller *Mao: The Unknown Story*, Zhang Rong accuses Mao of letting the Chinese peasants starve in order to launch a military program to transform China into a superpower.[42] However, Zhang's appendix shows that the public distribution of grain—that is, rations for the army—was relatively stable between 1957 and 1962; one must conclude that distributions to the army had no significant impact on the famine.

It would be incorrect to say that the government ignored the famine and sent no relief at all, but in terms of the resale of grain in the countryside, the relief was too meager to save the lives of millions. Table 4.2 shows the expenditures for relief *(jiuji)* in the countryside. Such relief was not limited to famine aid. In the first year of the famine in 1959 the government paid 270 million yuan for relief, far less than in the non-famine years of 1956 and 1957. In the worst year of the famine the expenditures doubled to 547 million yuan. It is remarkable that in 1961, when the death rate had already begun to fall, as well as in the years of recovery (1962–1964), the state provided more funding each

Table 4.2. State Expenditures for Relief in the Countryside, 1955–1964 (in millions of yuan)

Year	Funding	Year	Funding
1955	227	1960	547
1956	310	1961	735
1957	307	1962	552
1958	150	1963	696
1959	270	1964	1,355

Source: Shang Changfeng, "Sannian jingji kunnan shiqi de jinji jiuzai cuoshi" [The Measure of Emergency Famine Relief during the Three-Year Period of Economic Difficulties], 2010; unpublished paper.

year than during the worst years of the famine; it seems that only after the famine did the government realize it had to increase relief expenditures. In 1963 and 1964, China was struck by natural disaster. In 1964, the government spent 1,355 billion yuan on relief.

CUTTING RATIONS, CURBING CONSUMPTION

In 1959, it became clear that the strategy of the Great Leap demanded that the rural population eat less and save on food. In July 1959 during the Lushan Conference, Mao complained that the plan for the purchase of grain had not been fulfilled and suggested a reduction in rural consumption: "We can tell the peasants to resume eating husk and wild vegetables half the year *[kangcai bannian liang]*. . . . After one, two, or three years of hardship, one will free oneself. We should store more and use less grain. . . . The grain should be given back to the families, but they should eat in the dining halls. When the peasants are busy, they should eat more, and when they are unoccupied, eat less. They should eat gruel and cooked rice both and add vegetables to grain. They still can eat well and eat their fill. Can we do it like this?"[43] Furthermore, Mao said that peasants should eat one *jin* per day and livestock, half a *jin*. It is striking that Mao considered it a good meal when peasants had to add husk and wild vegetables to their grain to eat their fill and that for him several years of hardship for the peasants were justified so that the ambitious industrial programs could continue. As mentioned, the rural population was not entitled to ration cards from the state but had to survive on the amount that was left after the quotas were fulfilled. In the second half of 1959 and the first half of 1960, the procurement plans were unrealistically and fatally high. There was no guarantee that peasants would get even the mixed meal of wild vegetables and gruel that Mao suggested.

Despite all the supply problems, it was only in the second half of 1960 that the central government made an official decision to cut urban and rural rations. In August 1960, the Central Committee proclaimed that the entire party should be engaged in agricultural production and grain work. For the first time, the leadership acknowledged that the natural disaster had done serious damage to agricultural production. At that time, the tone of the official documents changed, and "Eating comes first" *(chifan diyi)* became a new slogan. In order to increase

grain production, the government sought to limit the number of temporary workers engaged in construction and water conservancy. It also sought to reduce the number of peasant workers *(mingong)* who were not eating in the public dining halls of their own villages to 10 million nationwide.[44] The Central Committee emphasized that the urban population should be strictly controlled, as this was essential to avoid wasting food. Instead of enacting a fundamental policy change, the state tried to limit the number of workers on its payroll and the number of mouths to feed in the cities. In order to save grain, it was believed that squash and so-called food substitutes should become an important part of nutrition. The food substitutes were often not very nourishing and thus contributed to disease, but the government believed they could be made to replace grain in the diet where grain was lacking.[45] In September, the Central Committee issued a document cutting both urban and rural grain rations and informed the party committees in the provinces, cities, and autonomous regions that in Shandong, Henan, Shanxi, Anhui, and Jiangsu peasants were threatened with starvation and that "eating green" and migrating from the disaster areas were widespread in Shandong. The document argued that the damage caused by natural disasters had been underestimated and that the party should undertake efforts to solve the problem even though the incidents of mass starvation were not occurring everywhere in the country.[46] The procurement rates in the regions mentioned above were too high and the remaining grain too little. Because of the decrease in production nationwide, all Chinese, whether in cities, in the countryside, in disaster areas, or in areas with bountiful harvests, should eat less. While the state had never issued ration cards to the peasants, it now defined maximum levels of consumption for them. Local rations, which were provided by the People's Communes and not by the state, were based on the production results of the teams. The government decided that annual rural consumption in South China, in the areas between the Huai and Pearl Rivers, should not exceed 360 *jin* of raw grain per person (around 490 grams per day). In the disaster areas, it decided consumption should be lower still, and in the areas where there were plentiful harvests, after the fulfillment of the quotas, it decreed consumption should not exceed 380–400 *jin*. North of the Huai River rations were not to exceed 300 *jin* (about 410 grams per day), though they could be a little higher in areas with cold winters, such as Dongbei

(Manchuria).[47] Consumption in the disaster areas was to be less than 300 *jin*. Such theoretical apportionment aside, during this time many peasants had no grain whatsoever and were living on tree bark and wild herbs or even starving to death.

While this decision also affected peasants in areas that were better off or had previously had higher rations, the government did not guarantee that peasants would receive any rations close to the amounts specified because the communes, not the central government, were responsible for the rations of their own peasants. The Chinese scholar Cao Shuji, who has done research in the archives of Wuwei County in Anhui Province, argues that local cadres were quite aware that a ration of 0.385 kg a day was the minimum level required to prevent death by starvation. Due to very high procurements the daily rations in Wuwei County fell below that lifeline figure in 1959, with the result that 200,000 of the population of 1 million died.[48]

In its decision, the government also emphasized the importance of conserving grain in the urban areas. Except for workers who were performing heavy manual labor, rations of the entire urban population were to be reduced by two *jin* of grain per month per person; this was a moderate cutback compared to that in the rural areas. The Central Committee used the natural disasters and the need to provide aid to people in those areas as justification for the cutback of urban rations. However, people without urban registration cards were less privileged; rations in the suburbs were not much higher than those in the countryside. As a further measure, the government called for struggle against the "black population" *(heirenkou)*, meaning people who lived in the cities without legal status.

Some grain was resold to suffering provinces and counties, but the amount was inadequate for the number of people who were hungry.[49] The government still emphasized the principle of "producing to provide relief for oneself." For example, a report in *Neibu Cankao* in February 1961 criticized local cadres in Huangzhong County in Qinghai Province for not fully understanding this principle. The report attacked the "hold out the hand faction" *(shenshou pai)*, which was calling for relief from the state without making an effort on its own behalf. Furthermore, local cadres were criticized for distributing relief directly to families and not to the collectives. The belief that nobody would starve if the food were in the hands of the peasants was considered a mis-

take.[50] In April 1961, *Neibu Cankao* reported on a severe drought in Henan and Shandong Provinces. Half of Henan Province had seen no rain for over five months; 1.5 million people were without food and water. In some areas people ran away to beg; in some cases, women and children were sold outright. The report predicted that enemies of the Socialist order would organize trouble. It also predicted that local cadres would not take the fight against the drought seriously and would be paralyzed by the crisis, believing that "on one side is the natural disaster, but help will come from all directions" *(yifang you zai, bafang zhiyuan)* or "the Communist Party will not let anyone starve to death" *(fanzhen gongchandang bu hui e'si ren)*.[51] From this document we can see that during the famine, the promise that in New China no one would starve to death acquired a new meaning; the report implied that the central government was not able to send relief to the millions who were starving. Local cadres were admonished not to use this promise to neglect local relief work but to organize "production to provide relief for oneself." Theory aside, the responsibility of fighting the disaster was placed squarely in the hands of local officials.

In the autumn of 1960, *Neibu Cankao* published some reports to explain the grain shortage without questioning the Great Leap Forward in general. In this context it is interesting to see how cadres tried to make sense of the suffering and explain the hunger. In Hebei Province, peasants in Xushui County had inadequate food, strong young men left the commune, and even pigs starved to death. In the autumn of 1958 Xushui County had served as a radical model for the country's transformation, and it was celebrated in the national media during that time.[52] The reports offered several reasons for the grain shortage. For example, temporary workers on the irrigation projects during the winter of 1959 had to bring their rations along with them and left less for the peasants at home. Or rations had decreased as a result of excessively high procurement rates. A table shows that procurements had risen from 68,416 *jin* in 1959 to 85,051 *jin* in 1960, but at the same time the yearly rations had decreased from 360 *jin* to 85 *jin*.[53] This meant that the peasants received a daily ration of only 116 grams in 1960. From the summer of 1958, grain consumption was neither planned nor strictly controlled. In the first period after the establishment of the public dining halls people ate as much as they wanted. In the autumn of 1959, the dining halls were abolished and the peasants ate at home. As a result,

consumption once again was unplanned. After the dining halls were reinstated in November, over-consumption occurred again. More grain was consumed because women were integrated into the workforce during the Great Leap. Before 1958, women worked at home and ate only gruel *(xi)*, while the men worked in the fields and had meals of steamed grain *(ganliang)*. Now women ate the same steamed grain as men. Like the above-mentioned report in *Neibu Cankao* in February 1959, which tried to explain the nationwide shortages, this document too focused on the increased numbers of workers, bad management of supplies, and over-consumption. However, the statistics cited in the documents show that high procurements in fact caused the decrease in the rations. During the peak of the famine in 1960, reports were still being published declaring the grain problem to be ideological. Presented as an example, the peasants of Tang County in Hebei Province were said to be ideologically confused *(hutu sixiang)* and to doubt that a great leap relating to grain usage had ever taken place. Although production had increased, rations remained low because of the integration of women into the workforce, higher consumption by poor and middle peasants, the increased number of temporary workers in basic construction and non-agricultural jobs, and poor planning of the grain supply. The poor and middle peasants who had previously consumed only 200 grams of grain a day now consumed 400 grams. The report argues that the rations might not be high, but they were enough to satisfy hunger. As during the nationwide natural disasters in 1956, the new low standards were to be only temporary.[54] These reports demonstrate that their authors tried to understand the reasons for the shortages, but they did not admit openly to how serious the problems were.

In 1959 and 1960, control of the urban population and stopping the uncontrolled recruitment of peasants by the state enterprises were mentioned in several government decisions.[55] However, the leadership was not willing or able to organize the transfer of millions of people back to the countryside. We do not know how the decision that the rural and urban populations should eat less was implemented; however, the figures for average per capita grain consumption in China show that the famine changed the relationship between city and countryside (table 4.3). In 1958, the peasants ate more grain (402 *jin* per year per person; 550 grams per day) on average than the urban population (372 *jin* per year per person; 509 grams per day). In 1960 a massive re-

Table 4.3. Average Consumption of Grain per Urban or Rural Inhabitant in China, 1952–1966 (in kilograms)

Year	All China	Cities and Towns	Rural Areas
1952	198	241	192
1953	197	242	191
1954	197	236	190
1955	198	215	196
1956	205	201	205
1957	203	196	205
1958	198	186	201
1959	187	201	183
1960	164	193	156
1961	159	180	154
1962	165	184	161
1963	165	190	160
1964	182	200	179
1965	183	211	177
1966	190	206	187

Source: Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu jihuasi, ed., *Zhongguo nongcun jingji tongji daquan 1949–1986* [A Complete Collection of Statistics Regarding the Rural Economy of China *1949–1986*] (Beijing: Nongye chubanshe, 1989), 576.

duction in rural consumption took place, and the rural-urban gap increased. While an urbanite consumed 386 *jin* per year (about 493 grams per day), a peasant consumed only 362 *jin* (about 427 grams per day).

In November 1960, the Central Committee issued a document to mobilize the party, state, army, and people to manufacture more food substitutes *(daishiping)*. Every party secretary was held responsible for carrying out the campaign in his or her unit. In the document, the leadership had to explain the extraordinarily low rations in the city and countryside that made the production of food substitutes necessary on a large scale. During the previous two years, agricultural production had suffered because of natural disasters. With the "Three Red Banners" (the general line of Socialist construction, the Great Leap Forward, and the People's Communes) the entire country's efforts to deal with the disasters had helped greatly to limit the destruction, but even so, the country had endured a difficult time.[56] The natural disasters were frequently blamed in late 1960 as the government started to face the famine but was unwilling to stop the Great Leap. The same is true

for the policies regarding food substitutes. The leadership of the CCP acknowledged that rations were too low, but instead of importing grain to feed the urban population and lower the burden on the peasants, the whole party was mobilized to produce food substitutes. These might include natural by-products such as stalks from various crops, various wild vegetables and mushrooms, and branches and stems from various crops, as well as synthetic foods made from bacterial cultures such as artificial meat extract, artificial milk, or artificial vegetable oil. Gao Hua argues that this campaign had deadly results in the villages because the foods substitutes were inadequate to save the starving, and some even died of food poisoning.[57]

One major argument of this chapter is that in order to continue the Great Leap, the grain purchases of the government resulted in a cutback in rural rations to starvation levels. Only when leaders began to feel that the hunger in the countryside was harming agricultural production in such a way that it threatened the supply in the cities were peasants allowed to keep more grain, but this did not occur until early 1961.

URBAN SHORTAGES AND UNREST

Even if there were no mass deaths by starvation in the important cities, the urban population still felt the impact of hunger. In factories, schools, and universities many people suffered from hunger-related edema in 1960. Only a few reports about urban unrest are available; *Neibu Cankao* reported in January 1961 that in Liaoning Province, one of the most industrialized areas of China at that time, a political education movement was thought necessary to pacify the panic-stricken masses regarding the grain supply. The party also felt it necessary to take aim at the various enemies of the state. As a result of the natural disasters and decreased production, the daily rations in rural areas were only around 100–200 grams per person per day. In the last four months of the previous year, incidents of grain theft had taken place on a daily basis. During certain of these incidents in cities such as Shenyang and Heishan, some of those who tried to protect the grain stocks lost their lives. In the city of Jinzhou, workers went on a collective hunger strike for four days because they were dissatisfied with the food supply. Cities overreported their population in order to get more

grain, and many people stole food from trains and cars. According to the provincial Bureau of Public Security in Liaoning, 95 percent of all counterrevolutionary incidents were related to the grain policy.[58]

Another report from January 1961 analyzed the problem of the policy of low rations, squash, vegetables, and food substitutes in the district of Baoding City in Hebei Province. In the rural areas, the elderly and children died of malnutrition, but even in city districts people received daily rations of only 100 grams or even less. Local officials reported higher rations than the people actually received in order to cover up the shortage. It was difficult to digest some of the food substitutes, leading to difficulties with excretion.[59] In the same month, mass disturbances in the cities and countryside of Henan Province were reported. The social order was in disarray because counterrevolutionaries used the spring shortage and drought to organize mass thefts of grain, attacking, and in some cases even killing, cadres. In Lankao County, local cadres founded a "save the people party" *(jiumin dang)*, and in Kaifeng an armed organization was even established. The report blamed the organized mass thefts on landlords, bandits, and counterrevolutionaries, but it had to admit that local cadres, peasants, workers, and students were also involved. In several counties and cities, the Huidaomen sect, which was powerful before 1949, became active again. The report goes on to say that Christians were spreading predictions that mass rebellion and chaos would break out if the populace did not receive grain in June. The report also claimed that women and children were being sold and illegal marriages were being performed as stratagems for surviving the famine *(duhuang)*.[60] In the same month *Neibu Cankao* published a report that some Christians had made accusations against the Communist Party such as the following: "There is a lot of pork, but who eats it? First, the army; second, the workers and technical staff; third, the high-ranking cadres; finally very little [is eaten] by the ordinary residents." And: "We do not have enough grain for us, but it is still exported. The human beings do not look like human beings, and the ghosts do not look like ghosts."[61]

It is not possible to estimate the level of urban unrest during the famine based on the few documents that are available. All reports quoted here were published in January 1961; one has the impression the reporters were encouraged to write about this issue during that month. The appearance and disappearance of topics in *Neibu Cankao* tells us

less about the extent of unrest during that time than about the political agenda of the leadership.

The rural famine and the urban shortages did not peak simultaneously. While 1960 was the worst year in many peasants' lives, the urban supply became tighter after the CCP decided to mobilize the party to improve the situation in the countryside in late 1960 and 1961 with the lowering of the procurement rates and taxes on the peasants. In September 1961 in many cities, fresh fruits and non-staple foods were not distributed at all or only in very small amounts. Even in Beijing, the government stopped handing out ration cards for meat between June 1961 and February 1962.[62] That the shortages peaked later in the cities than in the countryside can be proved, at least for Beijing, based on official statistics. According to statistics for consumption, on average in 1959 the city and suburban population of Beijing consumed 189.74 kilograms of grain per capita, a remarkable increase compared to 161.87 kilograms the year before.[63] During the peak of the rural famine in 1960, the urban citizens were still consuming 180.55 kilograms, or 494 grams a day. Before the famine, people in Beijing ate more white rice *(dami)* than flour *(mianfen)*. In 1960 flour and other grain crops provided most of the nutrition. In 1961, grain consumption fell to 164.97 kilograms per person and in 1962 to 160.34 kilograms. For the period between 1956 and 1978, 1962 was the worst for the urban population of Beijing, with a daily ration of 439 grams of grain. Compared to the years before 1958, the consumption of meat, eggs, and oil decreased in 1961 and 1962, while people consumed more fresh vegetables, mainly cabbage. (The government had organized a mass movement for people to grow and store cabbage in 1959.)[64] The consumption of vegetables decreased again in 1963, when the country had recovered from the worst of the famine. During the whole Mao era, even in the capital of the country, people's nutrition during the winter consisted primarily of cabbage, potatoes, and radishes. The statistics on consumption in the countryside that was under the administration of Beijing show that for the rural population 1960, not 1961 or 1962, was the worst year. The average consumption of raw grain fell from 183.5 kilograms per person in 1958 to 157.5 kilograms in 1960. In contrast to urban consumption, rural consumption had already increased to 167 kilograms in 1961.[65] Needless to say, the countryside in the area around Beijing was much better off than many other places in rural China.

During the urban shortages in 1961, high-ranking cadres, intellectuals, and workers who performed heavy labor in important state enterprises were better protected by the state than other groups. In early 1961, the government decided that the monthly grain ration of coal miners would be raised from forty-five *jin* to sixty-four *jin*, and additionally they received fifty grams a day of beans.[66] The grain ration of the miners was around two *jin* per day and double the recommended daily maximum ration for peasants. In December 1961, the Party committee of Beijing decided to give extra rations to high-ranking intellectuals and important cadres. The monthly grain ration was supplemented with one *jin* of sugar, three *jin* of beans, some eggs, and meat. After this decision was approved by the Central Committee, other cities started to implement this rationing policy as well.[67] Beans and sugar were very important for health reasons because grain rations alone could not provide the necessary protein. This privileged group has been called the "beans and sugar cadres" *(tangdou ganbu)*.[68]

This policy of privileges did not go unquestioned. In February 1962, *Neibu Cankao* reported on dissatisfaction about this policy in letters to the city government. One letter writer complained, "The salaries of the cadres above the seventies level is high, and their conditions are good. They do not lack any nutrition. Those who really need subsidies are the ordinary cadres. Their salaries are low, and the conditions are bad. They often have to go down to the villages and factories, so they use up more physical strength."[69] Others complained that the extra rations for the high-ranking cadres contradicted slogans about overcoming the bad times in solidarity. The dilemma of the government over feeding the city and transferring grain from the countryside while promoting agricultural production and improving relations with the peasants could be resolved only with imports and the reduction of the urban population. Zhou Enlai said the following at a working conference of the Central Committee on August 8, 1961:

> Right now it seems that there are no problems in the cities. But if we are not careful enough, the unexpected could occur. We must anticipate that control will become tighter in the cities, for if the cities are thrown into disorder *[chengshi ruguo luan le]*, all sides will be influenced. If we do our work well in the countryside, serious problems can be completely avoided, but the situation in the cities is still not clear now. Therefore the problem is that now we have to care for both the

> cities and the countryside. But which side should be more important? We have discussed this question several times in the Central Committee and made reports to the Chairman [Mao]. We must have a tighter control of the grain supply and distribution in the countryside to secure the cities . . . . If we focus on the countryside and do not get grain, we cannot distribute it in the cities. Would it be acceptable? Of course not. Could we dissolve the administration in the cities *[jiesan chengshi]* and all go back to the countryside, back to Yan'an? Not one single person would agree. . . . As grain has recently been in very short supply, the ministries of the central government should help the provinces and cities to downsize the industries and mining enterprises. We must take it as an urgent task to reduce the personnel. It is impossible for the cities to support so many people in the long run."[70]

Zhou's comments show the impossibility of extracting anything more from the peasants, but Zhou was also afraid that disorder might break out in the cities if the urban population could not be fed. Zhou argued that the government should tighten the grain supply in the countryside but at the same time reduce the urban population. He asked whether the Communist Party should abolish the cities and have city dwellers return to the countryside. This question might have been merely rhetorical. What Zhou did not mention was that the base of the regime's power in China had moved to the cities after 1949. The priorities of the party had shifted from peasants to the urban society, where heavy industry and the party bureaucracy were located. Furthermore, it seems unlikely that the peasants in the starving countryside would have welcomed the party leadership's setting up new Red base areas. Ironically, the strategy of the revolution of "encircling the cities from the countryside" *(nongcun baowei chengshi)* had turned into one of "tightening control of the grain supply and distribution in the countryside to secure the cities" *(jin nongcun, bao chengshi)* during the famine.

Yang Jisheng, the author of *Tombstone*, also collected some documents about mass theft and the increase of criminal activities during the famine. However, he argues that no disturbances took place on a wider scale because the CCP had set up an effective system to eradicate resistance, along with the supervision of "counterrevolutionaries" in the early 1950s, and it could control the population with the internal registration system. Any form of rebellion was nipped in the bud. The tight control of society rendered it impossible for anyone to launch a

movement or collect money and weapons with which to organize a movement. Besides, many people still had faith in the good intentions of the central government; the punishment of local cadres in 1961 and 1962 also mitigated their anger.[71] Yang is right that all independent institutions and political actors of civil society in urban and rural China had already been eliminated by 1959. However, I have noted above that the internal registration system was not strictly enforced in 1959 and 1960. Temporary workers were needed from the rural areas for the projects of the Great Leap. In order to fulfill plan targets, many work units ignored the instruction of the central government not to recruit new workers. It seems obvious that if peasants migrated to cities and gained access to the urban supply system by means of their new jobs, their chances of survival were greater than by organizing resistance. Furthermore, the protection of important cities and urban groups might have strengthened their loyalty to the CCP because the supply system of the government saved them from death by starvation. Unlike its counterpart in the Soviet Union, the urban population in China was already accustomed, even before the famine, to living on rations provided by the state. The CCP called for the country to tighten its belt in difficult times. The peasants could not hope for support from any other social groups, and facing death by starvation as they were, the appeal of the central government to save more grain in the countryside must have struck them as very cynical.

LOCAL CADRES AND HUNGER AS "EDUCATION"

While the supply of the "sugar and beans cadres" in the cities was organized by the government, it was much more difficult to control the consumption of rural cadres. The central government aimed at curtailing the corruption and privileges of the rural cadres, proceeding on the principle that they should receive the same rations as the peasants and that their tendency to eat more in secret and to give extra food to their relatives and friends should be investigated.[72] Special dining halls for cadres had existed widely since the public dining halls were established in 1958; now the cadres were ordered to eat in common public dining halls. Many cadres and their families survived the famine because their dining halls still provided grain and meat, while peasants received only watery soups.[73] It is unlikely that the dining halls for cadres were

actually abolished because hardly anyone in the villages could control the power of the local officials during the peak of the famine. In many cases, cadres abused their power over the food supply in the dining halls to punish peasants. In April 1961, Chen Yun pointed out the relationship between grain rations and the impossibility of speaking freely: "When a peasant has not received grain at home, he dares not speak freely because he is afraid that his rations will be cut. Furthermore, the private plots for the peasants must be preserved."[74] At that time, the central government was tired of getting false reports from the countryside and had an interest in having the peasants speak up when investigation teams arrived.

The local cadres played an important role in the relations between the state and rural society.[75] In contrast to cadres on the county level, who often rotated and had no deep ties to the villages, cadres for the production teams were recruited among the local population and lived in the villages. They had to make difficult decisions; for example, they could enforce the procurement of grain ruthlessly to please the higher levels of the government, but then local people might take revenge after a more moderate policy was introduced.[76] Or they could decide to protect their neighbors by underreporting and then be punished by the higher echelons. With policies often changing during the Great Leap, local cadres had to guess what the future stance of the government might be and what behavior was required. As we have seen in the reports of *Neibu Cankao*, local cadres were often blamed for underreporting, but at the same time the central government presented them as scapegoats for "leftist mistakes" such as the "wind of communism" (i.e., the communization of all peasant properties) and related violence.

In 1961 and 1962, many reports regarding the problems of local cadres were published in *Neibu Cankao*. After the abolition of the public dining halls in the second half of 1961, cadres lost some power over the peasants because the villagers no longer had to rely on the food distribution of the dining halls and they could use private plots to grow food. As we know, cadres used the distribution system for "educational" purposes during the famine, cutting rations to punish people. I could not find documents in *Neibu Cankao* for 1960 regarding this practice, but it became an issue in 1961, when the central government wanted to improve relations between the party and the peasants with the goal of restoring production. For example, one report claimed that

in Lanxi County, cadres did not allow the peasants to take any rest days. If someone asked for a day off, his or her rations were cut.[77] Another report criticized the overreaction of local cadres in Fujian Province against peasants who had dug out potatoes secretly. These cadres cut rations and organized struggle meetings, and people were paraded in punishment. One lower-middle peasant was placed under supervision for two years for stealing some potatoes. In Fu'an County 205 people were tied up and beaten; some of them died of their injuries, and others committed suicide.[78] It was also reported that cadres in middle schools in Yunnan Province had used the slogan "He who does not come to class will get nothing to eat."[79] Another report said that in some places the cutbacks in rations had deadly results, with peasants starving to death or committing suicide.[80] Many reports criticized the privilege and corruption of local cadres.[81]

Some reports argued that local cadres experienced great confusion about the new policies.[82] Many were dissatisfied and believed that those serving as cadres would suffer losses *(chikui)*. They summarized such attitudes as in the following: "If you are honest, you will lose, but if you are progressive, you will lose too"; "If you do not fulfill a task, you'll be criticized, but if anyone dies, you'll be punished"; and "It is hard to listen to the state and the masses at the same time." Many of the issues were related to the food supply. Cadres complained it was impossible to organize production based on the low rations. "With a daily ration of 200 grams, nobody can be enthusiastic." They felt under pressure to please the peasants and let them eat more, but they also feared the response of the upper echelons. Cadres would often get into trouble, and they incurred family problems as well because they had to enforce unpopular policies even among their own relatives. Furthermore, they had insufficient time to rest. At the same time, rural cadres demanded higher rations because they could not grow their own food on private plots or use the black market as the peasants did.[83] It seems that the central government wanted to restore the enthusiasm of the peasants by punishing corrupt cadres and abolishing penalties such as cuts in rations. However, the documents also show that the government remained concerned that local officials might be unable to resist demands from the local community. Given this mistrust, an alliance of peasants and moderate party leaders such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, who were in charge of the daily administration

between 1962 and 1965, was not possible.[84] Regarding violence on the part of local cadres, it was only in 1961 that critical reports appeared about the cutting of rations as punishment, and the central government issued a clear message that this practice had to be stopped.

ENDING THE FAMINE: IMPORTS AND THE REDUCTION OF THE URBAN POPULATION

Between the Lushan Conference in the summer of 1959 and the first half of 1960, Mao Zedong either ignored many cautionary reports or believed that mass starvation was only a local and not a national problem, according to his official biography.[85] It seems that Mao mainly devoted his attention to foreign politics and not domestic problems between April and September 1960.[86] The official biography points out that when more reports about the huge extent of the famine reached him, Mao started to readjust the system of the People's Communes, and agriculture with mixed ownership structures was introduced. After reading the official biography of Mao and the collection of his writings and comments, I had the impression that in his perception of the famine, a readjustment of the rural relations of production *(shengchan guanxi)* was the key to solving the crisis in late 1960 and 1961.[87] Many of his comments and instructions focused on reforming the People's Communes into a "three-levels-of-ownership" structure.[88] In contrast to Mao, senior economic policymakers such as Li Xiannan and Chen Yun considered the readjustment of the balance between rural and urban populations, exports and imports, and the purchase and sales of grain as fundamental to end the famine. Mao approved these proposals, but it seems that these topics were not his major concerns. Post-reform Chinese scholarship regarding the Great Leap is often focused on the transformation of ownership structures and distribution inside the communes.[89] The introduction of a household responsibility system in provinces such as Anhui and the abolition of the public dining halls in the summer of 1961 are presented as policies central to bringing an end to the famine. Indeed, the party leadership emphasized the importance of raising the enthusiasm *(jijixing)* of the peasants for production. Yang Dali and others argue that the reform of 1978 had its origins in 1961. The system of family farming on state-owned land that was practiced in Anhui, where it was called *zerentian* (responsibility field), and in

several other provinces allowed peasant families to produce for themselves and made them responsible for meeting the grain quotas. Land was not privatized, but the system questioned the concept of collective agriculture. In the early 1980s, a similar household responsibility system *(baochan daohu)* replaced the People's Communes throughout the country. As important as the readjustment of the People's Communes in 1961 was, however, I argue that the increase in production alone cannot explain the end of the famine. Grain production increased by 2.8 percent in 1961 (147.5 million tons compared to 143.5 million tons in 1960) and by 8.5 percent in 1962, but even in that year agricultural production was still much lower than in 1959 or in any other year between 1952 and 1958. In 1962, which is considered the year of recovery, China produced only 160 million tons of grain, as compared to 170 million tons in 1959.[90] To restore production in Anhui, the introduction of the household responsibility system was very important. Around 80 percent of the peasants in Anhui in 1961–1962 practiced this system.[91] In Henan, the new party secretary of the province, Liu Jianxun, decided to lend land to the peasants *(jiedi)* so that they could satisfy their own consumption requirements. In the worst hit saline areas, as much as 28.6 percent of the arable land was lent. For most of the province, for three to five years, about 15 percent of the arable land was used for private plots.[92] However, it is doubtful that the household responsibility system played a major role at the national level in ending the famine. According to Bo Yibo, around 20 percent of the peasants in the entire country were practicing this system.[93] By December 1961, Mao changed his mind and turned against the experiment in Anhui because he believed that it would threaten collective agriculture and lead to class differentiation in the villages. He made it clear that People's Communes on the three-levels-of-ownership structure were as far as the reforms could go.[94] At the Seven Thousand Cadres Conference in January 1962, the provincial leader of Anhui, Zeng Xisheng, was criticized for revisionism. In the following year, places that had allowed farming on a family basis changed their system to the smaller-sized People's Communes. I argue that the experiments with the household responsibility system were too local and short-lived to explain the end of mass starvation in China.

In addition to the reform of the People's Communes, the average purchase price for six major kinds of grain (wheat, paddy rice, millet,

sorghum, corn, and soybeans) was raised by 25 percent in early 1961.[95] A year earlier, Mao had rejected such an increase because he feared that higher grain prices would threaten urban stability.[96] Now the central government was willing to raise the price for its purchases, but it kept the retail prices unchanged. Therefore, grain prices for urban consumers remained low, but the government had to subsidize the resulting loss, which became a huge burden for the state's budget.[97]

To end the famine, not only did agricultural production have to be restored, but the whole system of grain distribution between the countryside and the cities also had to be adjusted. The government had cut back rural rations to secure the urban supply in late 1960, but peasants were too weak to work and livestock were dying by the millions. As a result, agricultural production was very low and many regions called for a reduction in the grain purchases. The CCP had pushed the Great Leap to an extreme. Without radical policy changes there was no way out of this impasse. Li Xiannian summarized these contradictions in a letter to Mao in May 1961, arguing that the reform of the People's Communes could stimulate production in the long term, but a faster solution was the import of grain and a reduction of the urban population.[98] If parts of the urban population could be fed with imports, the burden of the peasants and grain purchases in the countryside could be reduced. Furthermore, a reduction of the urban population could keep to a minimum the number of people who were entitled to receive subsidized grain rations from the state. Both policies would be related to a downsizing of industrial plans and programs. Li made it clear that without grain exports, it was not possible to import significant industrial technology. The attempt to restore agricultural production made it necessary to send millions of temporary peasant workers back to the countryside.

In late 1960 Chen Yun and Li Xiannian made important proposals to import grain. It is hard to understand why these decisions were not made earlier. Yang Shaoqian, who was involved in the grain policies, remembered: "At that time, we did not dare to take the importing of grain into consideration. Some people thought that it was revisionism to eat imported grain."[99] It was only when millions of peasants were dying that the leadership around Mao was willing to rethink this point of view. According to the official Chinese biography of Chen Yun, it was he who convinced Mao to import grain in December 1960.[100] Starting

in February 1961, grain was imported from capitalist countries such as Canada and Australia.[101] The imports were used to guarantee the supply of Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Liaoning, and areas that had been struck by disasters.[102] Between 1961 and 1965, on average 5 million tons of grains were imported each year. The net imports were around 4.18 million per year.[103] Despite the famine the government continued to repay its debt to the Soviet Union, which was experiencing its own grain crisis, and for political reasons the government decided not to accept any kind of foreign relief. China used the search for grain on the world market to become more independent of the Socialist camp. In 1960, 70 percent of its foreign trade was with the Socialist countries, but by 1961, it had been reduced to 47 percent.[104] This period can be considered a turning point in China's foreign relations. Imports between 1961 and 1965 were much greater than the 8.9 million tons that were exported during the Great Leap between 1958 and 1960. I have no data to show how the imports were distributed to cities and regions. However, Luo Pinghan argues that 5 million tons would represent 70–80 percent of the annual grain consumption of Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Liaoning.[105] As noted above, the grain supply of these four cities was under the guidance of the central government. Aside from the issue of the political importance of these urban centers, the central government might have felt it safer to use the imported grain in its own supply system than to distribute it to the provinces and villages, where it exercised less control. The food supply in the countryside would improve anyway because the government had lowered the grain quotas. Terry Sicular estimates that in 1961 the grain quotas and taxes were reduced by 8.85 million tons and in 1962 by another 2.1 million tons.[106]

The policies aimed at reducing the urban population by 20 million also contributed to ending the famine.[107] Twenty million is close to the number of people who had migrated to the cities since 1957. With the "sending down" program the central government was able to rid itself of the responsibility of feeding these people and was also able to lower the procurement rates in the countryside and reduce the burden on the peasants. In contrast to the urban youth who were sent to the countryside during the Cultural Revolution, these 20 million were used to agricultural labor and could return to their home villages. Furthermore, the 16–40 million peasants who had starved to death during the famine

left many empty houses and much land to cultivate. I could not find any references to this fact in the calculations of Chinese leaders on ending the famine. It is more likely that these documents are still classified in the Central Party Archives than that the leadership did not take the millions of deaths into account in reorganizing the grain distribution. Reading the speeches of Chen Yun from 1961, one gets the impression that the famine occurred because of the too-rapid increase in the urban population, which upset the balance between procurements in the countryside and sales in the cities.

Chen Yun was one architect of the new policies after 1961 and directed the "sending down" of the 20 million people from the cities. His suggestions were based on simple estimates: he argued that if the urban population could not be reduced, China would have to import 5 million tons of grain every year, with the result that most of its foreign exchange would be used to buy grain and not industrial goods. He thought that 20 million people could return to the villages and participate in the labor and distribution of the People's Communes, and he also thought that imports could help to restore the interest of the peasants in raising production. "If we import grain, we can take less from the peasants, stabilize their attitude toward production *[shengchan qingxu]*, and raise the enthusiasm of the peasants for production *[shengchan jijixing]*. If we take two or three years to develop agricultural production, the problems of the inner market can be solved."[108]

The central leadership realized at that time that the policies of the Great Leap had deeply demoralized the rural population, and in 1961 private plots were reintroduced. Such plots provided a basis for survival, and in some regions, the peasants called them "save life soil" *(jiuming di)*. Chen Yun argued that the people returning to the countryside would not need to receive supplies from the state. He estimated that if 10 million people could be "sent down," the state's supply burden could be reduced by 2.25 million tons of grain annually. In the case of 20 million, it would be 4.5 million tons.[109] In July 1961, the Central Committee decided to reduce the population of cities and towns by over 20 million over the next three years.[110] Chen Yun also offered interpretations of the supply crises in 1953, 1954, 1957, and 1959–1960. In 1953, the urban population had increased by 1.7 million over that of 1952, and the peasants did not sell enough surplus grain to the state at that time to keep up with the increased numbers of consumers. The

supply crisis of 1954 was caused by a combination of natural disasters and policy mistakes, with the state purchasing too much grain in the countryside. In 1957 the urban population had also increased, but the supply crisis did not come to a head in any publicly visible manner because the supply was quietly supplemented by reserves. Starting in 1959 devastating quantities of grain were being procured from the countryside, but the amounts sold in the cities, with their increased populations, were higher still. Urban sales now included not only the overwhelming quantities procured from the peasants, but also dangerously high amounts that were being drawn from the reserves.[111] Chen Yun's interpretation is quite different from the official version, which presents leftism and utopian policies as the major reasons for the famine.

In contrast to the slack enforcement of the internal registration system in 1959 and 1960, the instructions of the government to ferret out illegal residents in the cities were strictly carried out in 1961–1962. The urbanization of China stopped for a decade; one large lesson the CCP learned from the famine was to avoid having too many consumers in the urban rationing system. The registration system discriminated against rural citizens in terms of welfare measures, health care, rationing, and education. According to the state, it also stabilized, at a reasonable level, the burden on the peasantry of feeding the urban population. The leadership was quite clear that the reduction of the urban population would slow down industrial development in the cities. However, it decided that agricultural production should be given priority in the next years.[112]

URBAN-RURAL RELATIONS AND ENTITLEMENTS

During the famine, the radical politicization of hunger had deadly results and made it difficult for the CCP and peasants to deal with the nationwide famine. As in the early 1950s, the party leadership in 1959 considered hunger a local problem, not a national one. After the Lushan Conference in the summer of 1959, the state concluded that quotas would not be fulfilled because of peasants' underreporting of production and the hiding of grain. Now underreporting and the hiding of grain were no longer considered merely matters of political education; in some regions of China, cadres used bloody terror to take the

grain, including sometimes even seed grain and fodder for cattle. During the peak of the famine in 1960, the state was forced to react to the mass starvation. In the first half of that year, a policy change or an end to the Great Leap strategy was out of the question for Mao Zedong. As time went on, it became more and more difficult to transfer grain from the countryside to feed the urban population, which had increased by over 19.5 million since 1957.

While rations in the cities were moderately cut back, the state defined a low maximum level per person of around four hundred grams of raw grain a day for the countryside, without any guarantee that peasants would actually receive this amount. The famine was not planned or manufactured by the government; however, the rhetoric of saving food and tightening one's belt for the fatherland was used to enforce the absolute minimum level or even less.[113] In order to feed the urban population, the state used a massive quantity of grain from the reserves and organized new transfers from the countryside. The main goal of the CCP was to prevent an urban famine because the centers of administration and the working class were considered the basis of survival for the regime. The decisions of the Central Committee that were published during the 1990s in *A Collection of Important Documents since the Founding of the State* made it clear that cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin were given absolute priority. Instead of a fundamental policy change as in 1961 (imports of grain, abolition of the public dining halls, restoration of plots for private use, and reduction of the urban population), in 1960 the party leadership promoted further reductions in consumption along with a new diet based on squash, vegetables, and food substitutes; thus it is mistaken to say that the government ignored the famine. As a matter of fact, leaders such as Zhou Enlai and Li Xiannian, who are ironically often considered as moderate, played an important role in the administrative intervention to sacrifice the rural population on the altar of urban stability.

Luo Pinghan comments on the policy of cutting back rural consumption to feed the urban population: "During the so-called 'three years of temporary difficulties' many peasants found themselves in general in a situation of starving to death or half starving to death. The Chinese peasants tightened their belts in order to fulfill the procurement task of the state by sacrificing their own interests. Thus the substantial grain supply of the urban population and the stability of the Chinese soci-

ety could be maintained. This is the extraordinary contribution of the Chinese peasants during an extraordinary historical period."[114] This comment makes it sound as if the peasants made this "contribution" voluntarily, whereas in reality, many peasants tried to save their own lives by stealing, "eating green," or running away. As during other famines, peasants were too weak to organize uprisings and threaten the stability of the society.

Thaxton has criticized the notion in Western scholarship that peasants survived the famine thanks to the "administrative intervention" of the government by moderate leaders such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, and he argues that peasants survived the peak of the deadly famine in 1960 by stratagems of resistance such as "eating green."[115] In my view, however, neither peasant resistance nor the very moderate increase of agricultural production ended the deadly famine in 1961–1962, but rather it was finally resolved by means of the decision to import grain to feed the cities, along with a cutback of the urban population. I argue that it was less an increasing knowledge about the rural famine but rather the almost empty granaries in the cities in late 1960 that forced the government to end the Great Leap under the threat of urban famine. Although the reform of the People's Communes in 1961 increased agricultural production, grain imports and the "sending down" of 20 million urban inhabitants were major factors in ending the famine. These factors relieved the state of the responsibility of feeding these people and allowed it to lower procurement rates in the countryside substantially.

One of the most widely discussed theories of famine is the entitlement approach of Amartya Sen. Is this approach useful to understanding the Chinese famine of 1959–1961? Sen wrote his famous book, *Poverty and Famines*, in 1981, before the facts from China had become widely known. Like many others, particularly China scholars, Sen believed in the earlier stages of his work that the Chinese People's Communes had succeeded in eradicating hunger and poverty, even in the absence of a rapid increase in food supplies.[116] Referring to the Bengal famine of 1942–1943, Sen argued that famine could occur without any significant decrease in available food. Under British rule around 2 million perished in 1942–1943;[117] the reason for the mass starvation was not a lack of food in the country, but the loss of entitlement to it by parts of the population. Sen observes that it is by no means the case that the market

automatically distributes food to those in need. Here, the idea of entitlement comprises not only a simple legal right to food access, for Sen distinguishes among entitlements variously based on trade, production, one's own labor, inheritance, and transfer.[118] The entitlement approach has been widely discussed because it broke with the neo-Malthusian paradigm that focused on the development of population in relation to an increase in production.[119] According to Sen, traditional Malthusian pessimism believes that it is impossible to nourish the poor because economic growth always lags behind population growth, with the consequence that famines eliminate the "over-population." This pessimism contributed to the unwillingness of the British government to organize efficient relief in the cases of the Irish famine (1842–1848) and the Indian famines in the late nineteenth century. By contrast, according to Sen, modern Malthusian optimism is unconcerned about food problems as long as the output increases at least as fast as the population does.[120] This belief was reflected in many development programs following World War II. Sen, however, warns that not only slump famines (after a failure of harvest), but counter-intuitively also boom famines (after abundant harvests) are possible, in direct contradiction to the modern Malthusian outlook. In later works, Sen and Drèze point out that public action is needed to prevent famine, with the state building up reserves to provide subsidized grain when famine threatens to occur and the government financing public works programs to provide cash to the hungry, allowing them to purchase food on the market.[121]

Some scholars see no explanatory role for violence in the entitlement approach, despite the fact that many African famines after World War II have occurred in the context of war, civil war, or ethnic cleansing.[122] More generally, some scholars worry that the entitlement approach focuses attention on distribution in many development programs while downplaying the importance of growth in production and food availability.[123] Sen has acknowledged some limits of his entitlement approach, although he defends his central thesis.[124] As I see it, Sen's theses are accurate but general. Enough food and other resources exist in the world today to satisfy the basic needs of all, such that no one need starve or freeze, but millions have no entitlement to it. In this light, every form of poverty is a problem of entitlement. While famines can have different causes, the rich and the political elites have always had the capacity to do more than they have actually done to help the

starving, and with more sharing of food, more lives could have been saved. If poverty is always and without exception a problem of entitlement, then what does Sen's approach contribute to explaining any particular famine?

The question of distribution was of great importance in the context of socialism. The party-state enforced its priorities using the instruments of a public supply system, rationing, and control of urban-rural migration. Certainly we must ask what regions and groups of people had better access to food than others and why, and the decrease in available food supplies in general tells us nothing about the access to food of different parts of the population. This chapter demonstrates that during the famine conflicts about food between the peasants and the state escalated that had existed since the early 1950s. In contrast to other scholars, I argue that the urban population and the peasants in the disaster areas played a major role in this conflict. The peasants in the disaster areas were used by the government to curb the expectations and consumption of the rest of the population. The decision to save the urban population while letting the countryside starve could be considered a result of the hierarchies of food and hunger that the CCP had established years before the great famine.[125] Therefore, it can be said that peasants starved to death because they had no entitlement to food in the supply system. The entitlement approach is also highly relevant in looking at the ownership structures. Peasants who had no access to ration cards in China relied on black markets, private garden plots, and the concealment of production to survive, and it is important to see how the state reacted and dealt with these alternative forms of entitlement. During the Great Leap, peasants in many regions of China lost private plots and the access to markets. The new collective entitlements in the public dining halls did not provide food security because after the utopian heyday of 1958 rations were often insufficient for full meals, while local cadres abused their power to eat more or even used cuts in rations as punishment. Thaxton refers to this development as a "theft of entitlement."[126] In this chapter, I have shown that party leaders considered the restoration of private plots as pivotal in the plan to send millions back to the countryside in 1962–1963.

However, it would be too easy to reduce the famine to a failure of entitlements. Certainly it is uncontroversial to say that in the 1950s, China was one of the poorest countries in the world and that peasants

in many regions had a very low calorie intake. Among the various explanatory elements we cannot ignore the factors of a growing population and urbanization that created an overwhelming source of pressure for the government. The rural population suffered most during the famine because it was excluded from the rationing system, but by no stretch of the imagination was the Chinese state able to afford an expansion of the rationing system to include the whole population. Reading Thaxton, one might mistakenly come away with the impression that peasants could have survived the famines on their own simply by means of traditional stratagems such as fleeing, begging, and stealing. One also might draw the conclusion that it was the state, through the "theft of entitlement" and the collectivization it brought about, that caused the famine. This is not wrong, but I argue that in China, peasants also needed the state to prevent deadly famine. This is a goal the state could have achieved by setting up a relief system for natural disasters and by balancing the huge variations of production between the surplus and consumer regions and the needs of rural and urban society, finding a balance between the different sectors of the economy and society at a moment of the drastic decrease of available food. The tragedy was that a policy change in this direction was enforced much too late.

Peter Nolan, for one, finds the explanatory power of the entitlement approach limited. Gross agricultural production in the Soviet Union decreased by almost 30 percent between 1928 and 1932, and Chinese agricultural production decreased by over 30 percent in 1959 and 1960. In eight provinces, output declined by as much as 40–50 percent.[127] To make up for this difference in available food supplies among the different provinces would have required an extraordinary degree of administrative power, even for a government that had perfect information about the situation. According to Nolan, it seems unlikely that a democratic government would have done a better job than the Socialist ones. The question that should be asked, then, is why the Socialist systems experienced this terrifying decline in available food supplies in the first place.[128] In the euphoria of the Great Leap in 1958, the government lost focus on the reality that the grain problem was far from being solved. On the one hand, it did not trust the reports of hunger from the countryside and reacted much too slowly to the crisis. On the other, I believe that the relief system was unable to deal with a famine of this great a scale, involving a food availability decline of over 30 percent.

The CCP decided to protect the cities and use its extraordinary degree of administrative power to transfer more grain from the countryside. Thaxton is right that peasants suffered because of the corruption and privileges of local cadres, but these do not seem like factors capable of explaining the deaths of millions.[129] Within the logic of the system in 1959–1960, the only alternative for the government to deadly grain transfers from the countryside was to downsize the urban population in order to decrease the burden on the peasants, and to import grain to feed major cities. The reform of the economic structure of the People's Communes was an important factor in increasing production. However, this policy could not offer immediate help to the starving; only after the new harvest could it be effective.[130] In my view, the central mistake of Mao and the CCP was not the failure to include the rural population in the rationing system, but rather their waiting at least one year too long before introducing the policies to rebalance the entire system of rural-urban relations. Only after the readjustment of 1961 did enough grain remain in the countryside to permit peasants to recover from the famine. In the interim, 30–40 million peasants died a painful death. The famine of the Great Leap Forward remains the greatest shame of Maoist rule, which had promised that no Chinese would ever again starve to death.

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III

Famines on the Periphery

If one-third of the crop is then lost, it is called a minor famine. / If minor famines extend over a three-year period, it becomes a major famine. If there is a major famine, the masses will become refugees and die of starvation. / If one-tenth [of the people] become soldiers and three-tenths do not engage in productive work, one-third of the crop will be lost. If one-third of the crop is lost / and no reserves have been previously set aside, the roads will be filled with the corpses of displaced persons.

—Guanzi

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5 The Burden of Empire
The Crisis of "Indigenization" in Ukraine and Tibet

THE COMMUNIST PARTIES in the Soviet Union and China inherited the huge multi-ethnic empires of the tsars and the Qing. This similar inheritance is one reason why it makes sense to compare the two countries. After coming to power, the parties had to deal with an extremely heterogeneous population, and in this context, the developmental strategies of the Great Leaps are very important. The Great Leaps brought into crisis not only the relations between peasants and the state, but also the relations between the Russian and Han Chinese centers and other "nationalities" in the periphery. The famines had a profound, long-standing impact, especially on the Ukrainian and Tibetan questions. Collectivization and famine interrupted the peaceful process of integrating the peripheral nationalities into the Socialist state. First, this chapter will begin with a comparison of the Russian and Chinese empires and the rise of the national question in the early twentieth century; as we shall see, the question concerns what territories or groups the nation would encompass, how they would be identified and by whom, and what forms of rule or influence would take place. Second, the challenges of transforming the multi-ethnic empires into new Socialist states will be analyzed. Both Communist parties believed that it was essential to win over the "ethnic minorities" for the revolution. How the CCP adopted Soviet policies will be discussed. Third, the chapter will show

that the famines contributed to a crisis in the policy of "indigenization" (*korenizatsiia* in Russian and *minzuhua* in Chinese), which promoted local elites and culture. In the Soviet Union, the famine resulted in massive conflicts between the central government and the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. Last, I will explore what kind of impact the famines had on relations between the center and the periphery in general and why the unrest in the periphery did not pose a serious threat to the rule of the Communist parties in the center.

Among the many nationalities in the periphery, I chose the Ukrainian and Tibetan cases not because their societies are similar, but because in these border areas the famines resulted in a political crisis that was used by nationalist movements. As will be shown in chapter 7, Ukrainian and Tibetan nationalists used the experience of hunger to create powerful counter-narratives that challenged the Communist parties, arguing that the famines were deliberately organized by the "occupiers" in order to harm the nation. Nationalists in the diaspora were successful in creating national identities based on the memory of suffering. This is another aspect of the "politicization of hunger."

AGRARIAN EMPIRES AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Petrograd and Moscow had been the proletarian centers of the October Revolution, but the Russians made up only 52.9 percent of the population in the Soviet Union according to the population survey of 1926. The second largest group was the Ukrainians, with 21.2 percent. In the PRC during the first census in 1953, 5.8 percent of the population were identified as ethnic minorities.[1] However, their areas of settlement cover more than one-fourth of the Chinese territory, and the Tibetans, Uighurs, and Mongolians are located in important border areas. In the beginning, both Communist parties hoped that the goal of winning over the ethnic minorities could be achieved by a mainly non-violent approach, including the promotion of the languages and cultures of the non-Russian and non–Han Chinese people.

In recent years, Western historians have rediscovered empires as a subject of research. This development is called the "imperial turn." This interest arose partly from the dissatisfaction with the popular paradigm of "from empire to nation," which considered empires as traditional and nation-states as modern. In the new scholarship, the bound-

aries between the two became blurred, and scholars began to take the achievements of empires into account.[2] Many scholars debated whether China and Russia remained empires in modern times or whether they had become nation-states.[3] Before the breakdown of state socialism in 1991, only scholars who were strict opponents of the very existence of the Soviet Union described it as an empire. After the fall, it became common to refer to it as an empire for the very reason that it did collapse.[4] However, with a stronger focus on the non-Russian nationalities, a postmodern deconstruction of ethnic identities, and postcolonial studies on Central Asia, new debates about the imperial character of the Soviet Union have developed.[5] Regarding the PRC, these questions have been less debated.[6]

The difference between ideal types of empires and nation-states in modern times is that empires do not have clearly defined borders or claim sovereignty over a territory, but they have frontiers. The emperor in the center represents the unity of the empire and demands loyalty from his subjects.[7] In the Russian and the Chinese empires, the central state established only indirect forms of rule in the border regions. This is especially true in Russia for Central Asia and the far east and in China for the west. The rural society enjoyed a certain level of autonomy from the state and was ruled by nobility and village communes in the Russian case and the gentry and other local elites in the Chinese instance. As Weigelin-Schwiedrzik argues for the Chinese case, the relationship of power between the center and the periphery was a zero-sum game, whereby if the center lost power, the periphery would gain.[8] On the one hand, for the center it was important to prevent the periphery's growing strong enough to challenge it. On the other hand, the center had to allow a certain degree of self-rule so that direct interference would be unnecessary. Both empires lacked any legal definition of "nationality." Instead, in the Russian case, every individual had to declare his or her religion.[9] And in order to rule the empire, the tsars also integrated many Poles, Finns, and Baltic Germans into the nobility.[10] Russian patriotism in the nineteenth century was based on a belief in the tsar and not on ethnic identity or consciousness.[11]

The idea of a nation-state and nationalism became popular in Western Europe beginning in the eighteenth century. The project of nation building was closely linked to the French Revolution, the rise of capitalism, and the modern press.[12] The establishment of a modern mass

army was crucial to integrating the rural population into this project. Some scholars argue that on the eve of World War I, the peasants in Russia had not yet been transformed into Russians.[13] For example, Ronald Suny writes: "Russia's experience was one of incomplete nation-making, and in the final crisis of the empire the dynasty had no national legitimating formula to defend it against the claims of its opponents."[14] Due to serious defeats on the battlefields in 1916–1917 and socioeconomic problems, the Russian Army broke down when the peasant soldiers started to revolt and refused to continue the war. In the October Revolution of 1917, the national question played an important role when the Bolsheviks promised the nationalities who had suffered under Russian oppression the right to self-determination, and Finland and the Baltic regions declared independence.

A strict dichotomy between empire and nation might be too simplistic. In any event, the creation of an ethnically homogeneous nation-state as found in Western Europe was not a realistic option for the revolutionaries in China and Russia. The Bolshevik party promoted decolonization but wanted to carry it out in a manner that would preserve the territorial integrity of the old Russian empire. In order to achieve this goal, large national republics and tens of thousands of national territories were created in the early 1920s.[15] Stalin served as the people's commissar of nationalities from 1917 to 1924 and was considered the leading expert in this field. According to his influential definition, a nation was a "historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture."[16] This definition served as a theoretical basis for the creation of national territories, whereby in a first step toward indigenization, the culture and language of a nationality would be developed and local elites would be trained. This step was considered necessary in order to win over the non-Russian population to socialism. "Backward" nationalities were supposed to catch up with the economic and cultural development of the more advanced parts of the country, and the party leaders believed that in the later stages of communism, nationality would disappear altogether.

With these policies of indigenization, the national cultures blossomed in the 1920s. Many people who did not have a particular national or ethnic identity now became Russians, Ukrainians, or Kazakhs. The Soviet state sent out scholars and party cadres to define and label

nationalities.[17] According to Andreas Kappeler, the idea of a Ukrainian nation and language first became influential among a broader population in cities in the 1920s as a result of the policies of indigenization.[18] Under the tsarist regime, only Russian was taught in the schools, but in the primary education that took place in 1929, 97 percent of elementary school students in Ukraine received education in Ukrainian. The indigenization of the parties within the republics also made progress. Between 1924 and 1933, the percentage of Ukrainian members in the Communist Party of Ukraine increased from 33 percent to 60 percent.[19] Terry Martin argues in his classic study that the Soviet Union was established as an "affirmative action empire," a rubric referring to the policies of affirmative action begun in the United States in the 1960s in order to overcome discrimination against the African American population. While Martin refers to "empire" in the title of his work, its subtitle is "Nations and Nationalities in the Soviet Union." In my view, the Soviet Union was neither an empire in the traditional sense nor a nation-state. Yuri Slezkine describes the Soviet Union as a "communal apartment" in which the national republics and autonomous regions were "separate rooms." In the 1920s and 1930s, the state promoted an ethnic particularism whereby the legitimation of an ethnic community was based on the government's grant for territory.[20] The Russians played an exceptional role because among the larger nationalities, only they were not granted their own Communist Party.[21]

THE CHINESE ADOPTION OF SOVIET NATIONALITY POLICIES

The Manchurian Qing dynasty (1644–1911) expanded the frontiers of the empire to Xinjiang and other non–Han Chinese areas. In premodern China, the concept of "national minority" *(shaoshu minzu)* did not exist, as everyone, Chinese *(xia)* and barbarians *(yi)* alike, was assigned an appropriate place within the social order.[22] The main distinction in the Chinese empire was made between the civilized, who mastered the script and rituals, and the barbarians outside the center. The Qing empire was fundamentally pluralistic, and the famous emperor Qianlong (1711–1799) recognized at least five distinct groups of subjects: Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan, Turkestani, and Han Chinese. In Inner Asia the Qing chose practical approaches to ruling diverse

peoples. "Influential Qing empire-builders were often reluctant to seek major changes in local societies, in part because many officials believed that different peoples possessed different 'natures' *(xing)*, which justified policies of segregation and adaptation to indigenous institutions. Thus, the Qing often empowered local elites, an approach that certainly modified indigenous political institutions yet also allowed them to endure. In Mongolia and Xinjiang, for instance, the Qing adapted to local legal practices by incorporating aspects of traditional local law."[23] The "tolerance" of local customs and elites did not mean non-intervention in times of crisis, but the Qing did not try to change the local societies completely as did the CCP later.

In the late nineteenth century, Western ideas of nationalism, racism, and Social Darwinism became popular among Chinese intellectuals. The term "nationality" or "ethnicity" *(minzu)* was adopted from the Japanese language and was first used only in 1882.[24] Despite the Taiping Rebellion and Western imperialist expansion since the mid-nineteenth century, the Qing empire remained intact until 1911. Even the nationalists imagined the borders of the new republic, which was founded after the Xinhai Revolution of 1911, within the "geo-body" of the Qing empire.[25] As a matter of fact, the republic's claims for sovereignty, defined borders, citizenship, and promotion of a national identity of the Chinese people *(zhonghua minzu)* were modeled on Western ideas of a modern nation-state. However, the revolutionaries soon realized that if they wanted to hold the "geo-body" of the Qing empire together, building a heterogeneous Han nation-state was no solution. The new state was instead founded as a republic of the five races (Han, Manchu, Mongol, Hui, and Tibetan).[26] As a result of World War I, the Habsburg and the Ottoman empires collapsed and new nation-states were founded. In the Chinese Republic after 1911, the several central governments could exercise control over only parts of the Han Chinese heartland and lost the periphery to warlords (Xinjiang) and later to Japanese occupation (Manchuria).

The attitude of the CCP toward the ethnic minorities was heavily influenced by the Soviet Union. In the 1920s and early 1930s, the party modeled its concept of state-building on the Soviet constitution of 1918 and promoted a union of autonomous republics of Mongolia, Tibet, and Xinjiang based on the right of self-determination and regional autonomy for minorities within these republics. However, after the Japa-

nese invasion of Inner China in 1937, the party leadership downplayed federalism and the right of self-determination and emphasized the "united front" of all nationalities.[27] The slogan of "self-determination" was replaced by a quest for more autonomy for the national minorities. It was only after the establishment of the PRC in 1949 that Tibet was "reunited with the motherland" and the Soviet Union lost its influence in Xinjiang. The borders of China today are more or less identical with those during the Qing empire, except for the independence of Outer Mongolia. The CCP made the decision to defend the borders of the PRC by whatever means necessary, and separatist movements were and are considered tools of foreign imperialism meant to harm China.

The constitution of 1954 proclaimed the equality of all nationalities, regional autonomy, and freedom for languages and cultures. Autonomous regions for minorities such as the Mongols, Uighurs, and (later) the Tibetans were established, and larger settlements of minorities within provinces gained the status of autonomous districts. This structuring also meant that in the autonomous regions cadres would be recruited from among the minorities. In the 1950s, the central government made huge efforts to research the cultures and languages of minorities, to define them *(minzu shibie)*, and to develop new scripts for those with no traditions of a written language. In this regard, the Chinese Communists copied the early Soviet policies of indigenization. Around four hundred ethnic groups applied for recognition as national minorities, but in the end only fifty-five were granted this status. Many Western scholars argue that this "making" of national minorities and the Han majority was existentialist in its motivation.[28] Every citizen was forced to accept assignment to one nationality, which was written down in the household registers. While the status of "Han" could be chosen without any justification, a minority lineage had to be proved.[29] However, many people at this time had no clearly defined ethnic identity such as Tibetan, Zhuang, or Han. James Leibold's view that the main goal of the CCP was the "nationalization" of the minorities into a single category of "the Chinese nation" *(Zhonghua minzu)* is an oversimplification.[30] If homogenization was the central aim, why did the CCP discover, define, and recognize so many minorities; help to develop their languages; and support the appointment of their cadres in the 1950s?[31] Leibold focuses chiefly on the 1930s and 1940s, when the CCP tried to build a united front against the Japanese invaders.

Among all the minority nationalities, Tibet enjoyed a special status within the new Socialist state from 1951 to 1959. In 1913, Tibet had officially declared its independence. Melvyn Goldstein argues that between 1911 and 1950 Tibet was in a state of de facto independence against the background of civil war and the Japanese occupation in China, but no country officially recognized Tibet as an independent state de jure.[32] This status changed with the so-called "peaceful liberation" of Tibet as a result of the 17 Point Agreement between the local government in Lhasa and the central government in Beijing.[33] The head of the Tibetan government, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, acknowledged Tibet's "unification with the motherland." In return, the Chinese government agreed that the traditional theocracy could stay in power and that the mass political campaigns and reforms that had been enforced in the rest of the country would not be implemented in Tibet. In 1954, the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama even became vice-chairmen of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. No other minority leaders were so assiduously courted by the Chinese government at that time. This period of Sino-Tibetan relations can be compared to those in the Qing empire, in which the center mainly used the local elites to rule the periphery and allowed the existence of different indigenous laws and customs. The CCP did not promote social revolution and did not interfere in the exploitation of peasants by landlords and monasteries. In contrast to conservative Qing officials, the CCP did not believe that it was impossible to transform the Tibetan society because of its supposed unchangeable "nature"; the Chinese government merely acknowledged that a transformation to socialism would require more time in minority regions. According to Goldstein, Mao developed a gradualist strategy for Tibet. He hoped that it would be possible to incorporate Tibet in a peaceful way and win the Tibetans over to become loyal citizens of a multi-ethnic new China. The feudal and religious elites could remain in power as long as they did not organize armed rebellions. In case the gradualist strategy did not work out, the PLA was ready to crush uprisings.[34] In 1952, Mao even argued that in Tibet the land reform and rent reduction of the peasants should not be enforced within the next three years because in contrast to the situation in Xinjiang, no Han Chinese settlers were available to support the center.[35] However, the arrangement between the CCP and the Dalai Lama lasted only seven years, and the alliance collapsed in March 1959

as the result of an uprising in Tibet and the escape of the Dalai Lama to India.

PEASANTS AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

Some important differences remained in the policies toward minorities in the Soviet Union and China.[36] National branches of the Communist Party and union republics were never established in China. It was clear that Russians and non-Russians were considered different ethnicities. "Citizen of the Soviet Union" was never an ethnic category.[37] By contrast, for Mao and his comrades, the minorities were a part of the Chinese nation. The self-determination of the entire people could be achieved only by a Han-led revolution.[38] In China, the party could easily claim that the Han Chinese were the most developed people. In the Russian empire, Russians were not superior to Poles, Germans, or Lithuanians in terms of economic development and education.[39] In the 1920s, the Bolsheviks did not promote any positive Russian national identity, but in the 1930s Russian national culture was rehabilitated. The Russians were now considered the leading nationality within the concept of a "friendship of the people."[40]

Furthermore, in the Soviet Union, the national question was also interlinked with the peasant problem. Andrea Graziosi argues that for Stalin the two questions formed a single nexus.[41] In a speech regarding the national question in Yugoslavia in 1925, Stalin said: "But it is . . . beyond doubt that, after all, the peasant question is the basis, the quintessence, of the national question. That explains the fact that the peasantry constitutes the main army of the national movement, that there is no powerful national movement without the peasant army, nor can there be."[42] As a matter of fact, the cities and the proletariat in Ukraine were highly Russified, while peasants in the countryside spoke various Ukrainian dialects. Nationalist intellectuals saw the peasants as the spine of Ukrainian culture. Graziosi uses this connection between the national and the peasant questions in Ukraine as an argument that Stalin used the famine of 1931–1933 to kill two birds with one stone. By willfully maneuvering the famine into genocide, the Soviet government was able to break the Ukrainian peasantry and with it the nation's spine.[43] Ukrainian historian Stanislav Kul'čyc'kyj argues in a similar direction that Stalin aimed to destroy the Ukrainians both as peasants

who resisted grain procurement and collectivization and as citizens of a republic that had the potential to become independent from the Soviet Union.[44] (The genocide thesis will be evaluated in more detail in chapter 7.) The question remains of how strong the national consciousness of the Ukrainian peasants really was. It was only after 1917 that nationalist Ukrainian intellectuals were able to find broader mass support for their movement.[45] During the Russian Civil War, many Ukrainian peasants took sides with nationalist and anarchist forces against the Bolsheviks and the cities. Communist leaders remembered this as the "cruel lesson of 1919."[46] Graziosi summarizes the "program" of these revolts as the peasants' fight against grain requisitions and for village self-government and a respect for religion.[47] It seems that the peasants were more interested in defending their grain and villages against outsiders than in promoting any national program.[48] One should bear in mind that Stalin's remark regarding the connection between the national question and the peasantry (cited above) was intended to help the Yugoslav Communists recognize that the solution of the national question was central to the victory of the Socialist revolution.[49]

In China, the questions of nationality and the peasantry were less interlinked. In some parts of the country conflicts between the Han and the minorities reflected those between peasants and nomads. In the Tibetan case, only very few Han Chinese lived in the smaller cities before 1951, and the Tibetan elite was not Sinicized at all. As we will see below, a strong conflict with the local populations originated with the necessity of feeding the soldiers of the PLA.

THE FAMINE AND THE CRISIS OF INDIGENIZATION

In the Soviet Union and China, the policies toward the nationalities show discontinuities. In the early periods, both parties considered Russian and Han Chinese chauvinism as greater threats than local nationalism. This evaluation began to change because of the political radicalization during the Great Leaps.[50] In the Soviet Union, policies toward the nationalities began to radicalize with collectivization in 1928–1929. As a result of the Soviet Great Leap and the first five-year plan, economic and political power became more centralized. The radical collectivization in the years before the famine increased the conflicts with some non-Russian nationalities when traditional pastoral ways of life

were challenged. For example, the collectivization of livestock caused a severe famine among the nomadic population in Kazakhstan, where the death rate of about 35 percent was even higher than in the rest of the Soviet Union as most of the 1.5 million victims were nomads.[51] In Ukraine, the peasants had stronger traditions of private land ownership than in the black earth regions of Russia. Generally speaking, resistance against collectivization was stronger and much more violent in the non-Russian and Cossack regions of the Soviet Union. In early 1930, when the resistance was at its most intense, 45.1 percent of all mass revolts of peasants took place in Ukraine (which had 19.5 percent of the Soviet population).[52] The state responded with the deportation of whole villages. By the early 1930s, Stalin had become highly distrustful of "national Communists" in the republics, who wanted more independence from Moscow, especially in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. One of Stalin's major concerns was that policies of indigenization would strengthen local nationalism and counterrevolutionary forces.[53] Furthermore, the industrial workers in the cities were much more assimilated with the Russian culture and language. Therefore, not a few activists of the party opposed "Ukrainization."

During the famine of 1931–1933, the state was under great pressure to succeed in the grain collection effort in order to feed the cities, despite decreasing agricultural production. As a major surplus region, Ukraine was of central importance for the grain supply system. Martin argues that Stalin came to a national interpretation of the food crisis. He blamed the government's failure to meet the grain quotas in 1932 on the wrong implementation of "Ukrainization" and on the leadership of the Ukrainian party.[54] Furthermore, he believed that Polish agents would use "counterrevolutionary forces" in Ukraine to destabilize the Soviet government. In August 1932, Stalin even made the remark, "If we don't make an effort now to improve the situation in Ukraine, we may lose Ukraine. Keep in mind that Pilsudski is not daydreaming, and his agents in Ukraine are many times stronger than Redens or Kosior think. Keep in mind that the Ukrainian Communist party (500 *thousand* members, ha-ha) includes not a few (yes, not a few!) rotten elements."[55] Whether Stalin really believed there was a danger of losing Ukraine is controversial. He might have made this remark in order to justify the purge that was to follow against the "national Communists." The policy of indigenization did not come to an end in

general, but the Politburo of the CPSU decided in December 1932 to abolish "Ukrainization" for all Ukrainians who lived inside the Russian Soviet Republic.[56] As a result of the campaign against "national Communists," Mykola Skrypnyk, the people's commissar for education of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic and famous promoter of Ukrainization, shot himself on July 7, 1933.[57] Many other Ukrainian party leaders were killed during the "Great Purge" (1936–1938). Fearing the disloyalty of the non-Russian population in the event of a war, the government deported at least nine Soviet nationalities in the borderlands in the east and west (Poles, Germans, Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Koreans, Chinese, Iranians, and Kurds) from their respective territories between 1935 and 1938.[58]

In China, a rebellion took place in the periphery during the early period of the famine. The Tibetan uprising in March 1959 was the most serious armed rebellion in the history of the PRC. We should keep in mind that in 1958, neither the "democratic reforms" nor the People's Communes had been implemented in Tibet. The CCP understood Tibet as a feudal society. "Democratic reform" meant a land transfer from the monasteries and the aristocracy to the peasants. This policy was considered as part of the democratic revolution, not the Socialist one. In 1957, the central government decided not to enforce "democratic reforms" in Tibet in the next six years.[59] However, the old elite felt threatened by the radical transformations in the Tibetan areas in the other provinces. To understand the links among the destruction of the Tibetan theocracy, the Great Leap Forward, and the famine, one has to take developments outside Tibet into account. The "democratic reforms" started as early as the mid-1950s in the Tibetan areas of Amdo (in Qinghai, Gansu, and Sichuan Provinces) and Kham (in Qinghai, Sichuan, and Yunnan Provinces). The "reforms" caused violent uprisings in 1956 in Sichuan and in 1958 in Gansu. In Litang, Sichuan Province, the PLA went so far as to bomb a monastery to quell the resistance.[60] Far less well known than the rebellion in Lhasa in 1959 is an uprising that took place in the spring and summer of 1958 in the minority areas of Qinghai Province. It began in April with the so-called "Xunhua Incident" in a county populated by the Salar minority. The armed rebellion expanded to 6 autonomous districts, 24 counties, and 307 monasteries. According to the official statistics, more than one hundred thousand people were involved, about one-fifth of the Tibetan population

of Qinghai.[61] The central government had to send the PLA in to crack down on the rebellion. Battles between soldiers and armed nomads continued in some regions for over six months. According to the official *Short History of Modern Qinghai*, fifty-two thousand people were arrested in 1958 and 1959.[62] The book claims that the rebellion gained the support of so many people because the "reactionary classes" could use religion and the monasteries to mobilize forces. The nomads possessed quantities of firearms, ammunition, and spears, and the uprising would have been supported by "reactionary forces" both from abroad and from Tibet.[63] A significant number of rebels and refugees fled into Tibet after the suppression of these uprisings by the PLA, and Lhasa became the center of the anti-Chinese opposition.[64]

The uprisings were also a reaction to the major policy changes by the central and provincial governments. Before the Great Leap Forward, the party treated minority areas as special cases and was aware of the problems that radical social change would cause.[65] However, the Great

Leap radicalized policies regarding the minorities. With the establishment of the People's Communes in August 1958, "backward customs" came under attack. Tibetan women in Gansu Province were told that the weight of their elaborate headdresses slowed down work in the fields.[66] In 1958, the CCP launched a class struggle in the nomadic areas and mobilized the poor herdsmen against the herd owners. Literally overnight, peasants in the minority areas, who did not have experience with the lower stages of collectivization, were organized into People's Communes in a "single strike."[67] New multi-ethnic communes broke down the borders of the villages and increased the pressure for assimilation.

During the early Great Leap in June 1958, the provincial government of Qinghai started an over-ambitious campaign to open up wastelands and to turn grasslands into agricultural land. In April 1959, the party committee of the province even set a goal that the prefectures should become self-sufficient with grain, vegetables, and fodder within two years.[68] According to the official history, this campaign seriously damaged the grasslands, and conflict between peasants and nomads increased. Grain production on the new land remained very low.[69] Until 1958, collectivization had not been implemented in the minority regions in Qinghai, but with the Great Leap land and livestock were collectivized. The policy of settling nomads and uniting agriculture and animal husbandry *(nongmu jiehe)* led to disastrous results, and a huge number of cattle died. According to official statistics, the number of cattle decreased from 15 million in 1957 to 10.8 million in 1958 and 9.3 million in 1960.[70]

The meat rations of the nomads decreased, but grain to balance the loss was lacking. According to Li Jianglin, the uprising in Qinghai was linked to hunger. Death by starvation occurred as early as in the first half of 1958 in some areas of the province.[71] By the end of the year, the nomadic areas of the province were hit by famine. As with the Soviet treatment of the Kazak famine of 1931, the PLA treated nomads who fled the famine as "bandit rebels" *(banfei)*.[72] The conflicts about collectivization also turned into a rebellion against the Han Chinese. As a result of the "democratic reforms," the number of monasteries was significantly reduced because religious institutions lost their land and monks had to perform labor. According to official numbers, 731 out of 859 monasteries were closed in Qinghai by the end of 1958, and

24,613 out of 54,287 monks and nuns had to join agricultural cooperatives.[73] In 1962, the central government readjusted the policy toward the minorities and reviewed the closing or destruction of the monasteries critically. An official report claimed that in Qinghai only 1 percent of the original number of monasteries had been preserved; in Gansu, only 2 percent; in Sichuan, 4 percent; and in Tibet, 6.5 percent.[74] These figures show that the closing of the monasteries started years before the Cultural Revolution.

For the Chinese government it was quite clear that the rebellion in Qinghai could spread to Tibet. In June 1958, Mao approved the hard line of the provincial leadership in Qinghai against the rebels. In this context, he made the remark: "Tibet should be prepared to handle a possibility of an overall armed rebellion there. The greater the disorder is, the better. If the reactionaries in Tibet dare to launch an overall rebellion, then the laboring people there can be liberated earlier."[75] Goldstein argues that this statement did not mean that the central government had given up the gradualist strategy toward Tibet as a result of the uprisings in Qinghai. On July 14, the Central Committee of the CCP claimed that "reactionaries" in Tibet might carry out an armed rebellion, and in this case the PLA would crush it. However, the central government did not change its decision to postpone the reforms in Tibet, and it expressed hope that the local Tibetan government would support this approach.[76]

It took another nine months until parts of the Tibetan elite and people started the rebellion that Mao had imagined earlier. After rumors spread that the PLA planned to kidnap the Dalai Lama, mass demonstrations broke out in Lhasa on March 13, 1959. The crisis turned into an armed rebellion.[77] The PLA was able to quell the uprising after several weeks, except for guerrilla activities in the remote mountain areas. In the absence of social or ethnic unrest in other parts of the country, the Tibetan uprising was no major threat to the rule of the Communist Party. Nevertheless, the party leadership was quite aware that the Tibetan question could cause a conflict with neighboring India, and conflicts between the two countries in the Himalayas resulted in a border war in 1962. While in the Soviet Union in the aftermath of the famine Stalin replaced the tolerant version of indigenization in the republics with stronger centralization and purges against "national Communists," the Tibetan uprising ended the alliance between the old

Tibetan elite and the CCP. In the aftermath of the uprising, the CCP also enforced the "democratic reforms" in Tibet and distributed the land of the aristocracy and monasteries to the peasants. For the first time, the CCP started to recruit a significant number of poor Tibetans to serve as cadres for the party.[78] With the destruction of the Tibetan theocracy, the Chinese government established more or less direct rule in Tibet. Ironically, after the establishment of the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) in 1965, the central government exercised more, not less, control over the region.

In the summer of 1959, the provincial government of Qinghai admitted that mistakes had been committed during the crackdown of the rebellion. Some cadres and army units had killed captured rebels in order to take revenge for their fallen comrades. Other units were involved in plundering. In May, the party committee of the province ordered that such cases should be investigated. Compensation for the loss of cattle should be paid.[79] The leadership criticized cadres for not distinguishing between contradictions with enemies and contradictions among the people. Forty-four thousand people were released from prison because they were innocent or had committed only minor infractions.[80] This number shows the serious escalation of the conflict between the CCP and the Tibetan population in Qinghai during the Great Leap.

Qinghai was a grain deficit area and imported grain between 1953 and 1964.[81] As in the whole of China, the urban population had increased rapidly during the Great Leap. Between 1957 and 1960, the population in cities and towns rose from 398,000 to 824,600.[82] In 1960, an extraordinarily high number of 1,009,300 people were eating trade grain, meaning that they were receiving rations. This figure represented over 40 percent of the whole population of Qinghai during that time.[83] When the government readjusted the economy, the urban population was reduced by half in 1963 compared to 1960. The numbers of trade grain eaters decreased by 301,000 in 1961 and 180,000 in 1962,[84] reducing the burden for both agricultural producers and the state. Furthermore, nomads were compensated for the expropriation of their livestock, which had taken place when the People's Communes were founded. The taxes of the nomads were lowered from 10 to 1.5 percent. The central government increased the transfers of trade grain by 100,000 tons in 1962.[85] The famine was finally over, but the

relationship between the CCP and the Tibetan population in Qinghai had been seriously damaged.

The new revolutionary regimes inherited multi-ethnic empires from the tsars and the Qing. During the first ten years of rule, they had hoped that a policy of "indigenization" would help to win over the minority populations for the Socialist project. Considering the experiences in Ukraine and Tibet, Stalin and Mao might have felt that moderate nationality policies had not paid off and that local elites had behaved "ungratefully." The Great Leaps marked a turning point. The Soviet and Chinese Communists ended the most tolerant period of indigenization, and the center strengthened control over the periphery. In Qinghai, the radical reforms and the famine resulted in bloody uprisings in 1958. The Communist parties may have decided to protect the major cities in the periphery in order to hold the "geo-bodies" of the former empires together. From history, the new rulers knew that these large empires could exist only with a strong center capable of preventing separatist movements or "independent kingdoms" in the periphery. A breakdown of order in the center could endanger the unity of the whole state. Dominic Lieven writes about Russia: "In a centralised empire such as Russia, power was in any case concentrated in the Russian capitals, Petersburg and Moscow. In the last resort a government which controlled them and the railway network could reassert its power in the periphery, as tsarism did in 1905–7 and the Bolsheviks in 1918–23. Non-Russian nationalism would only become a major danger if Russia entered a European war or revolt erupted in the Russian heartland. This of course happened in 1914–17."[86]

During the famine of 1931–1933, the Soviet government was able to maintain stability in the important cities. Rebellions in the periphery did not meet with support from the centers. During World War II, the successful defense of Moscow and Leningrad had an important effect on the will of the Soviet people to continue the war. In Republican China, it seems that the control of the center was no guarantee for rule over the periphery. Despite the control of important cities, the GMD failed in the 1930s to penetrate the countryside in the hinterland and the border regions such as Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet. However, when the CCP seized power, the state became much stronger.

Widespread armed uprisings in Qinghai in 1958 and Tibet in 1959 could be crushed by the PLA and did not pose a serious threat to the rule of the Communist Party. However, it must be said that the famines and the crises of the policies of indigenization destroyed the hopes for a peaceful and non-coercive integration of Tibetans and Ukrainians into the new states. The devastating experience of famine provided stories ripe for the creation of nationalist counter-narratives that would challenge the official views of the Communist parties.

6 "Eating Mice for the Liberation of Tibet"
Hunger in Official Chinese History

THIS CHAPTER WILL SHOW how the CCP used hunger as an argument in its narrative of the "liberation of Tibet."[1] The focus on the perception of hunger in memory and official history adds another dimension to the research on the famine. For all Chinese nationalists, Tibet is part of China. The party has proclaimed itself the defender of the unity of the motherland with its various nationalities, and in the PRC, the history of minorities is written within this framework. While the CCP rejected Han chauvinism at least in rhetoric, the Han are presented in the media as the most progressive group, which helps the "little brothers and sisters" to develop. John Powers writes of a propaganda war that has been fought on the battlefield of historiography between the PRC and the Tibetan government-in-exile in India.[2] Instead of focusing on starving Tibetans, the Chinese historians have created a narrative in which the Chinese government introduced policies to secure the food supply in Tibet. This chapter will show how the creation of meaning and of dominant narratives was also linked with food politics. First, it will analyze the official version of history, according to which heroic soldiers of the PLA were willing to eat mice to liberate their fellow Tibetan countrymen. Second, it will be shown that Chinese historians selected sources to prove that the Chinese government made heroic efforts to feed Tibet, sources that gave the impression Tibet was not

affected by any serious famine. Third, the ways Chinese scholars downplay the excess mortality in Tibet will be critically reviewed. Last, it will be argued that the burden of feeding the large population of Tibetan monks was used as an argument by the CCP to justify attacking the dominant clergy during the "democratic reforms" and that food metaphors were used to criticize a traditional Tibetan way of life.

THE OFFICIAL CHINESE HISTORIOGRAPHY ON TIBET

According to the official Chinese view, Tibet has been a part of China since the thirteenth century. Chinese historians have made great efforts to find evidence that Tibet was a part of China, while the Tibetan government-in-exile has tried to emphasize the fundamental differences between the two cultures. Official historiography in China went through significant changes after the death of Mao Zedong. However, the continuity of the official view on the history of modern Tibet is astonishing, as I will show in the following. If one compares the propaganda brochures of the early 1950s about the building of new highways to propaganda concerning the Goldmund-Lhasa railway today, one sees that the messages are very similar: these connections with the Chinese motherland will bring development, prosperity, education, modern infrastructure, and health care to Tibet. However, that Tibet was, is, and will continue to be a part of China is unquestionably the central message.[3] Between 1950 and 1959, when there was an alliance of the CCP with the Tibetan elites, and since the beginning of the reform policies in 1978, the narrative has been focused more on the achievements in Tibet than on any misdeeds of the theocratic regime during the "democratic reforms" in the early 1960s and the Cultural Revolution.

Although the policies of the Cultural Revolution toward the minorities are considered a disaster, "leftist mistakes" are only briefly mentioned in the official history books on Tibet. In recent years, some Chinese publications have cautiously questioned the official narrative of class struggle with respect to the process of land reform (1947–1953) generally, but as regards the specifically Tibetan context, descriptions of the exploitation of Tibetan serfs are unchanged.[4] The story that the Tibetans were liberated twice—once in 1951 from imperialism and again in 1959 from serfdom—is told again and again. A good example is the official "White Paper: 50 Years of Democratic Reforms in Tibet."[5] In

publications since the 1990s, Chinese scholars have made more references to Western research, especially that of scholars such as Tom Grunfeld and Melvyn Goldstein, who are regarded as more objective and whose works have also been translated into Chinese.[6]

One goal of Chinese research is to deconstruct the counter-narrative of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. Tibet is one of the most sensitive political issues in China, and even critical Chinese academics who publish in Hong Kong their books on the Great Leap Forward or the Cultural Revolution dare not touch upon the impact of such campaigns in Tibet. Two major publications on the Great Leap published in Hong Kong by Chinese scholars omit any discussion of famine in the Tibetan areas.[7] The limited accessibility of useful population statistics and archives is only one possible reason for this omission. Despite the absence of research on the famine in the Tibetan areas, the topic of food and hunger appears frequently in the official Chinese narrative. However, the description of hunger is used very differently than in the Tibetan exile narratives, as we will see below.

HUNGER NARRATIVES OF CHINESE SOLDIERS

The narrative of the Tibetan exiles portrays the Chinese troops in Tibet as a heavy burden for the population. In truth, the feeding of the PLA became one of the biggest challenges for the Chinese government during the "peaceful liberation."[8] After a long and dangerous march with horses and mules through the highlands, the PLA reached Lhasa in late 1951. An official textbook published in 1984 describes the suffering of the PLA soldiers, who carried just seven days' food supply with them: "The large majority of the cadres and soldiers were tightening their belts. . . . Sometimes they could not even eat two meals of millet gruel a day. When masses and patriots saw this situation, many of them felt sorry. Sometimes at night they brought bags with barley to the base of the soldiers."[9] Memoirs of PLA soldiers and official textbooks emphasize the suffering of the soldiers on this "Long March" for the sake of the unification of the motherland. The lack of a good road made importing quantities of grain from inner China almost impossible. In the memoir of two PLA soldiers who marched over the highlands from Ganzi to Lhasa, the search for food plays an important role. This book was published as part of a series celebrating the fiftieth

anniversary of the "peaceful liberation" in 2001. Wang Gui and Huang Daojun describe how the PLA soldiers in Ganzi tightened their belts in order not to harm the local Tibetan population. Mao Zedong had decreed that the PLA should not eat local grain when entering Tibet, and given the low production, no grain was available for purchase in Ganzi. The soldiers received rations of less than 400 grams a day while they performed hard labor building an airstrip to allow food to be brought in by plane. In order to stave off hunger, the soldiers ate all kinds of wild plants and weeds *(wa yecai cong ji)*. The story of how some soldiers even caught mice and ate them *(zhua dishu cong ji)* is told in great detail in *Blood Speaks for Tibet*; the story also receives mention in the *Grain Gazette of the Tibet Autonomous Region* published in 2007.[10] When the local people saw the starving soldiers at work, they helped them build the airstrip. Wang and Huang remember: "Because of a serious shortage of grain, we did not purchase one *jin* of grain. We would rather have been hungry than increase the burden of the Tibetan countrymen."[11] Once the airstrip was operational, the nutrition of the soldiers improved.

On the march into Tibet, the army received orders that subunits or individuals were not allowed to purchase any food in the markets or small shops, and the purchase and distribution of food were centralized under the Department for Finance and Trade. Even so, some hungry soldiers violated the orders and made purchases in small restaurants or teashops in Lhasa.[12] Wang and Huang also describe a clash of cultures in terms of eating. In the beginning, some of the soldiers were nauseated by the smell of yak butter *(suyou)* and did not know how to make *tsampa (zanba)* and butter tea; the Tibetans taught them how to use yak butter and prepare *tsampa*, and gradually the Chinese got used to the taste.[13] In Wang and Huang's account, food is used to describe the ability of the PLA soldiers to fit into the new cultural environment and to adopt Tibetan customs. We will see below that Tibetan exiles draw ethical lines based on the different food habits of the Han Chinese.

BREAKING THE "GRAIN BOYCOTT" TO FEED THE PLA

In 1951 Lhasa had a population of around thirty thousand. The eight thousand PLA troops in Lhasa needed 2,850 tons of grain annually for the men and 650 tons for the horses.[14] According to the "17

Point Agreement," the local government should assist in the purchase and transport of food, but the Chinese government was aware that a requisition or purchase of Tibetan grain could cause unrest. In April 1952, Mao Zedong outlined a solution to the problem. For one thing, the PLA should promote its own production and become self-sufficient. For another, Mao was concerned that reactionary forces in the Tibetan upper class could use a food crisis to attack the PLA, and he wished to prevent a decline in the standard of living of the Tibetan population; thus it was deemed necessary to build highways to facilitate large imports from inner China and India. Mao warned: "In the case that India one day in the future does not give us grain, our troops still should be able to make a living."[15] Later, Mao's policy was accompanied by the dictum that when the PLA entered Tibet, it should not eat the local food *(bu chi difang)*.[16] In the early 1950s, the self-sufficiency of the PLA was more a goal than reality. One Chinese source states that in 1952 the PLA planted 943 hectares and could produce all of its vegetable needs and 30 percent of its grain needs.[17] This meant that grain and rice had to be imported and purchased from the Tibetan aristocrats and monasteries. With the permission of the Indian government, the Chinese shipped 28 million pounds of rice from Guangdong Province to West Bengal and from there to Tibet.[18] From India the rice had to be transported via Phari to Lhasa on mules, yaks, and horse carts. In 1952, the Chinese government organized a large land transportation program from Sichuan. More than 66,900 animals and over 15,600 laborers were used in this effort. As one might imagine, these imports were extremely costly, and it was natural that the construction of the Qinghai-Tibet and Xikang-Tibet highways, finally completed in 1954, became the major projects of the PLA. The Chinese government published several books praising the heroism of the soldiers and Tibetan contract workers in building the highways and the sacrifices they made for the sake of the nation.[19] The celebration of their accomplishments did not, however, prevent Tibetan guerrilla fighters from sporadically interrupting the functioning of the highways up until the early 1960s.

Even with the newly constructed highways, imports and the army's own agricultural production in Tibet were not adequate to feed the cadres and soldiers. With grain stores in Tibet controlled by the monasteries and the aristocracy, the Chinese were dependent on the cooperation of the local elite. The official Chinese textbook from 1984 (noted above)

blames the "reactionary forces" of the Tibetan elite for organizing a grain strike. Unlike the patriotic Tibetan masses, reactionary elements among the upper classes and the Tibetan government "gloated over others' misfortune" *(xing zai le huo)*. These elements were described as being happy to see the Chinese soldiers starve and trying to boycott the sale of grain to the army according to the motto, "If we can't defeat the PLA, hunger will force it to leave."[20] In the official Chinese narrative, hunger is used to draw lines between friends and enemies. While the PLA soldiers suffered for the sake of the nation, the Tibetan masses supported them and the reactionaries tried to use hunger as a weapon to force the Chinese troops to leave. The official *Grain Gazette* of the Tibet Autonomous Region reports that the reactionary clique of the Tibetan upper class closed down the grain market *(shixing liangshi fengbi)* and caused a shortage of grain *(zhizao lianghuang)*.[21]

Bapa Phüntso Wangye (known as Phünwang) reports in his memoirs about the threat of a grain boycott. Phünwang was a Communist and the only Tibetan in the so-called Tibet Work Committee (Xizang Gongwei), which represented the Chinese government and was set up under the leadership of the PLA commander, Zhang Guohua. In his memoir, published by Western scholars, Phünwang presents himself as a critical Tibetan Communist unafraid of conflicts with the Chinese government for the good of a Socialist Tibet. According to him, Lukangwa, a member of the aristocracy and acting prime minister of the Tibetan government, said to Wang Qimei, a senior commander in the Eighteenth Army: "Now, after you have defeated our troops, you have arrived in Lhasa promoted to 'Commander Wang.' But we here will not be easy to suppress. Leaving everything else aside, the grain for your soldiers will not last."[22] The anti-Chinese Lukangwa was dismissed from office in 1952.

It may be that some Tibetan aristocrats planned to organize a grain boycott against the PLA, but there is no evidence that a boycott took place on a large scale. According to Phünwang, the real problem was not the shortage of grain per se but rather the lack of an efficient system to get surplus grain from the countryside to Lhasa.[23] In order to limit both the food shortage in Lhasa and inflation, the PLA encouraged the Tibetan government to establish a new joint grain authority with Phünwang as vice director. The central government in Beijing provided hundreds of thousands of silver dollars for this institution for the pur-

chase of grain. However, the collection of grain was not a simple task. The Chinese were shocked when they discovered that 140,000 *jin* of grain had been stored in a granary below the Potala Palace for fifty years and was now inedible.[24] The story that the clergy allowed mountains of grain to rot while the Tibetan peasants did not have enough to eat fit into the class struggle narrative that the CCP established in its publications on Tibet after 1959. The discovery of the 140,000 *jin* of rotten grain in the Potala Palace is the only event that the chronology of the *Grain Gazette* mentions for 1951.[25] To sum up, the official Chinese narrative emphasizes the great efforts made to avoid any burden on the Tibetan population, even though importing grain was dangerous and expensive.

FEEDING AND SECURING TIBET

After the highways to inner China were built in 1954, the food situation improved in Tibet. According to Chinese sources, no food for the PLA soldiers and party cadres was purchased in Tibet later on, but huge amounts of grain were imported from China.[26] Furthermore, an official book on the status of Tibet in history mentions that the Chinese government provided famine relief and low-interest credits for the victims of the floods in 1954 and 1955. In the areas of Jiangzi and Baiiang 170 villages were affected by natural disasters, with 691 people and 8,000 cattle dying in the flood.[27] The book describes the heroic actions of PLA soldiers to save the Tibetan peasants from the flood, whereby from its own resources the army gave over 200,000 *jin* of grain to the flood victims. Despite this great effort to help the Tibetans, according to this book, reactionary forces in the Tibetan upper class spread the rumor that large amounts of the relief grain were embezzled by the PLA. The book further claims that after the flood of 1954–1955, Tibetans never again died as a result of natural disasters, thanks to the effective relief system.[28]

The *Grain Gazette* also tells how vast quantities of grain were shipped in from inner China to stabilize the market in 1956 and to fight inflation.[29] However, this source does not mention that the transfer of Han Chinese cadres to Tibet was one reason for this inflation, as the Chinese bought many buildings from the Tibetan aristocrats in order to provide housing for these cadres. In 1957, the government began to establish

a rationing system for Han and Tibetan workers, cadres, and students. Rice and wheat flour were provided to the Han, while Tibetans mainly received their rations in barley. The Tibetan uprising in March 1959 and the following "democratic reforms" resulted in a transformation of the grain supply system. The Indian government, which sympathized with the Tibetan rebels, stopped its exports to China and closed the land road for shipments of Chinese grain over India to Tibet. As a result, the Tibetan Work Committee decided to abolish the free trade of grain and established a state monopoly.[30] As in the rest of China since 1953, purchase and distribution were state-organized in Tibet from 1960 on. In the same year ration cards were introduced to the whole urban population.

From 1959 on, the Tibetan peasants had to pay a "patriotic grain tax." The tax was set at 8 percent of the agricultural income of every rural household. In 1961, the Tibet Work Committee made the decision that the tax rate should be 7 percent of income for the next five years.[31] This grain tax was very moderate compared to that in inner China, where the grain tax burden on peasants had increased, despite the famine of the Great Leap Forward. Furthermore, areas that were strongholds of the Tibetan uprising were allowed to defer their tax payments for a certain time because the Chinese government wanted to secure these areas.

In 1962, the central government criticized the policy of uniting agriculture and animal husbandry. In some regions, huge pastoral areas were turned into agricultural land. As a result, the grassland was destroyed and the number of cattle decreased dramatically. The Central Committee decided that the pastoral areas should attach most importance to the development of husbandry.[32] The official collection *Selection of Important Documents of the Work in Tibet*, a volume of over seven hundred pages, includes only documents of the central government that show concern for the food supply of the Tibetans, and no famine is mentioned. In January 1961, Deng Xiaoping argued that the state should purchase less grain from the peasants in Tibet and avoid the "leftist mistakes" of past years. Peasant families should be allowed to store grain themselves and raise more privately owned cows and sheep.[33] Three months later, the Central Committee decided that the troops of the PLA and Han Chinese engineers should be fed with imports from inner China for another three to five years and that only

the cadres of the special districts and counties, who were not numerous, should eat local grain. The army was encouraged to fight for self-reliance in grain supply by establishing state farms and thus reducing the burden of imports for the state. The Central Committee warned that if a great natural disaster *(zaihuang)* were to take place, it would be difficult to send relief from inner China due to the bad road conditions.[34] In the Central Committee document, the threat of a famine was used to underline the necessity for the PLA to achieve self-reliance in grain supply in the near future. The *Selection of Important Documents of the Work in Tibet* shows the selectiveness of official collections. No documents are included from 1958 and none from 1966–1973, the first period of the Cultural Revolution. Because decisions on other Tibetan areas in Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan are missing, the radical "leftist" policies against nomads and monasteries during the Great Leap are not documented in this context.

Chinese sources claim that the first two harvests after the "democratic reforms" were good and that production increased after the peasants began to work on their own land.[35] The reader of the *Grain Gazette* is given the impression that the Chinese government promoted a moderate policy in Tibet and that no famine took place. The authors of the gazette make no reference whatsoever to the situation in Kham and Amdo, where in 1960, during the peak of mass starvation in inner China, huge amounts of grain were shipped into Tibet to feed the army and secure the region after the uprising. The Tibetan peasants paid moderate taxes and the number of Tibetans entitled to receive food rations from the state increased, according to the official account. Are the arguments and statistics in the *Grain Gazette* only part of the propaganda that the Chinese government spared no effort in order to help and feed the Tibetan population? Grain gazettes from other provinces such as Henan show a skyrocketing increase in the grain tax burden in 1959 and a serious decline in agricultural production.[36] In the case of Tibet it is likely that the Chinese state was not willing or able to transfer much food to the Chinese cities or other provinces. The internal publication *Historical Material on Grain Work in Contemporary China* provides statistics of net imports and exports of all the Chinese provinces, but for Tibet the data start only with 1960. According to these statistics, Tibet was a net import region and imported grain from other provinces (23,000 tons imported in 1960, 16,000 tons in 1961,

and 11,000 tons in 1962 and 1963). After 1966, the grain imports continued yearly.[37]

The main instruments for large-scale grain transfers (collective agriculture, a state-controlled granary system, and the household registration system) were not implemented in Tibet until the early 1960s; the state grain monopoly was introduced in 1960. At the beginning of the "democratic reforms," the Tibet Work Committee and the Preparatory Committee for the Establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region did not have their own granaries. Therefore, they depended heavily on the grain stores of the monasteries. In 1962, over 39 percent of the seed grain reserved for planting was stored in monasteries and over 26 percent in private households in the Lhasa and Linzhi areas.[38] It took until 1966 to build an independent granary system. For the authorities it was a difficult task to secure the granaries on a local level because anti-Chinese guerrillas and "reactionaries" attacked and burned down the granaries or stole the stored food. In 1963, 20,083 kilos of grain were stolen or allowed to rot in the granaries.[39] Subsequently the government set up a system of local responsibility for monitoring the grain stores.

The government did not fully enforce the household registration system until 1964,[40] and the People's Communes were established between 1968 and 1973. The Chinese leadership was well aware of the strategic importance of Tibet, as exemplified by the border war with India that broke out in 1962, just three years after the Tibetan uprising.

IS IT TRUE THAT NO FAMINE OCCURRED IN TIBET? EXAMINING THE STORY BEHIND THE CHINESE STATISTICS

The *Grain Gazette* is silent about the famine. If one looks at the population statistics, however, it is obvious that something extraordinary must have happened in Tibet.

Between 1953 and 1964, the ethnic Tibetan population, taking into account all areas, declined by 9.9 percent, a total loss of 270,000 people (table 6.1). Tibet proper lost about 66,000 people. The population of China declined between 1959 and 1961 by 13,480,000 people.[41] But the statistics still show an increase in the population between the first national population survey in 1953 and the second in 1964, in

Table 6.1. Growth of the Tibetan Population in China, 1953–1982

	1953	1964	1982
Total	2,753,000	2,501,000	3,874,000
Province			
Tibet	1,275,000	1,209,000	2,190,000
Yunnan	67,000	65,000	96,000
Sichuan	234,000	607,000	922,000
Qinghai	494,000	423,000	754,000
Gansu	205,000	193,000	305,000

Source: Yang Kuifu, *Zhongguo shaoshu minzu renkou* [The Population of the Minority Nationalities in China] (Beijing: Zhongguo renkou chubanshe, 1995), 21.

contrast to Tibet. In contrast to other regions, birth and death data for the Tibetan population are not available for this period, but the Tibetans are among the very few nationalities that lost population during that span of time, when the populations of other large minorities such as the Mongols, Hui, Miao, and Uighurs increased.[42] As a matter of fact, in all provinces the Tibetan population declined, with the exception of Sichuan, and there only for definitional reasons because Xikang Province, with a large Tibetan population, was abolished in 1956 and integrated into Sichuan Province.

How do the Chinese explain the population loss of the Tibetans? Liu Juan argues that the "period of economic difficulties" (1959–1961) must have had an effect on the Tibetan population as well.[43] However, she does not explain why Tibet lost population despite the fact that the Great Leap Forward was not implemented in this region. She considers the numbers for 1964 as proof that the Tibetan population grew faster outside Tibet because there the "democratic reforms" were enforced earlier and the standard of living was higher. By implication she links the decline of population in Tibet with the bad nutrition and health conditions under the rule of the Tibetan elite. The scholar Ma Rong has questioned the correctness of the statistics altogether. In 1953, the Tibetan government was in charge of the population survey, and a household registration system did not exist. Ma considers the figures for 1953 a guess that may have been too high. He doubts the figure for 1964 as well because the registration system had not been fully implemented.[44] Furthermore, the migration of tens of thousands of Tibetans to Southeast Asia after the suppression of the uprising in 1959

contributed to the decline of the population. The Australian-trained demographer Yan Hao has estimated the missing Tibetan population between 1953 and 1964 at 152,000, a figure that also includes around 90,000 people who fled with the Dalai Lama to India or migrated elsewhere. As a result, the disappearance of only 60,000 people had to be explained in relation to the famine, political repression, and uprising.[45] Yan has estimated the excess deaths in the Tibetan population during the entire famine period at less than 30,000.

It seems that Yan Hao is doing accurate academic demographic experiments with official statistics. However, his arguments, which downplay death by starvation, show a lack of understanding of the historical circumstances of the Great Leap Forward. He argues that more than half of the Tibetan population to this day is made up of self-sufficient nomads. Their livelihood would seldom depend on an external food supply. He ignores the fact that during the Great Leap the nomads in Amdo and Kham were organized into People's Communes and were forced to "combine agriculture with animal husbandry" *(nongshou jiehe)*. Some of them were forced to give up their nomadic ways and adopt a settled existence. Official documents of the central government from 1962 have described the disastrous results of this policy and criticized this practice, especially in the grasslands.[46] The losses in the Tibetan population in Gansu and Qinghai Provinces show that the nomadic population was not immune to the famine. Furthermore, Yan questions the claim that large quantities of agricultural and pastoral products were trucked out of Tibet. Yan argues that the government exempted Tibetan peasants in the Tibet Autonomous Region from all agricultural taxes at that time. Contradicting Yan, the official *Grain Gazette* says that the "patriotic grain tax" for agricultural units and individual peasants was introduced in 1959.[47]

Yan goes on: "What was the point of loading barley on small trucks and sending them along the zigzag road 3,000 metres above sea level to feed the numerous and rice-eating Sichuanese a thousand miles away, especially since the Soviet Union had cut off oil supplies, so that fuel was seriously short in China at the time?"[48] It might be true that no food was trucked out of Tibet, but Yan's explanation deserves a deeper look. A Tibetan refugee quoted a very similar argument by a Chinese official in the early 1960s: "Recently, the reactionaries have been circulating malicious rumors to the effect that we transport barley to China.

The Chinese do not eat *tsampa*, so why do we need berley [*sic*]? All the truckloads of barley that is [*sic*] being transported is [*sic*] taken to feed the nomads of the northern regions."[49] Why would starving peasants in Sichuan rather die than eat barley? Are the Han "rice eaters" and the Tibetan "barley eaters" so different in terms of culture that Tibetan products could not be used to feed Han Chinese? A closer reading of Yan's article shows that there is an apologetic story behind his demographic arguments.

The suffering of the Tibetans is excluded because the fact of the famine as an event in Tibetan history is treated as a taboo; this taboo, along with the lack of statistics, makes it difficult to write about starvation in the Tibetan areas at all.[50] Based on the Chinese sources, the extent of the famine can only be guessed. By contrast, the data from other provinces and various books and memoirs on the Great Leap Forward have made it possible to reconstruct the events in inner China in more detail.

WHO SHOULD FEED ALL THE MONKS AND NUNS? A CLASH OF WAYS OF LIVING

The "democratic reforms" revolutionized the economic and political system of Tibet. In the context of this chapter it is worth noting how the destruction of the theocracy changed the food supply for monks and nuns. In his autobiography the Dalai Lama argues that the policies of the Chinese government amount to genocide because they were intended to destroy Tibetan Buddhism.[51] The Chinese government never officially questioned the freedom of religion, but with the beginning of the "democratic reforms" in Tibet, the party began to attack the system of theocracy. The transfer of land from the monasteries to the peasants undermined the power of the clergy and made it impossible for the monasteries to support a great number of monks and nuns. The process can be seen as an attempt to secularize Tibetan society and to break the economic and political power of religious institutions in everyday life.

One characteristic of Tibetan Buddhism is the extraordinarily high percentage of monks and nuns in the population compared to other Buddhist countries such as Thailand, Burma, or Laos. According to Chinese sources, 10 percent of the whole population in Tibet in the early 1950s served as monks; for the cities the estimate was as high as

half of the population.[52] Chinese books like to emphasize that the high percentage of the male population in the monasteries was one reason for the tradition of polygamous marriages and a high number of unmarried women with illegitimate children.[53] Without exploiting the peasants, the monasteries could not feed the monks and nuns. For example, in 1958, 2,771 monasteries hosted 114,103 lamas; in 1959 the three biggest monasteries in Lhasa owned 147,000 *mu* of land and 111,000 head of cattle, and 40,000 serfs were subordinate to their authority. In 1960, 370 monasteries included 18,104 lamas.[54] The "democratic reforms" brought about a steep reduction in the number of monks and monasteries, and many monks and nuns were sent to the countryside or made to perform forced labor. In a conversation with the Panchen Lama in January 1961, Mao Zedong argued that only several thousand lamas should be allowed not to participate in production: "In the past in Tibet out of 1.2 million people over 110,000 have been lamas. We cannot feed them. It is too much. For the development of production and population it is harmful."[55]

The party established a narrative of waste around food offerings as early as the land reform campaign in the Han Chinese areas. In the famous propaganda movie *Baimaonü* (The White-Haired Girl, 1950), a girl who is driven into the mountains by the oppression and abuse of a landlord tries to avoid starvation by stealing food offerings from a monastery. The movie *Nongnu* (Serf, 1963) worked with the same metaphor in the Tibetan context. In the story, a hungry Tibetan serf steals food offerings from an altar, and monks demand to cut out his tongue as a punishment for stealing "Buddha's food." The CCP considered the willingness of monks and nuns to work and produce their food with their own hands to be part of their transformation from what the state viewed as a parasitic way of life to a Socialist one.[56] Just as in the context of the land reform, the party used the symbolism of food to draw a class line in the monasteries between the "feudalist" higher clergy and poor lower clergy, and the poor monks and nuns were encouraged to "speak out bitterness." The American journalist Anna Louise Strong, a CCP sympathizer, traveled to Tibet after the suppression of the uprising and attended some "speaking bitterness" meetings and "struggle sessions." Her reportage is very close to the official line of the CCP during that time, and indeed her entire tour was organized by the party. Like the peasants, the ordinary monks and servants in the monasteries

learned to "speak out bitterness" regarding hunger before liberation. A servant told Strong: "For food he (the master) gave me the spoiled leftover *tsamba*, and of this two small bowls a day. My hunger was never stilled. When anything went wrong I was beaten for it."[57] Strong wrote that lower lamas told her that the best grain went to the upper lamas while they had to eat poor grain mixed with chaff and gravel. Furthermore, the obligatory "four bowls of buttered tea" that were served daily were water rather than real tea. After a committee confiscated the food stores of the monasteries, all monks were probably fed, according to Strong. The CCP could achieve several goals at the same time by means of the "democratic reforms": a reduction of both the burden on the peasants and the number of "unproductive eaters" in the monasteries. Because the religious, economic, and political power of the clergy was linked, it could be destroyed in one single strike.

In Chinese books on modern Tibet the argument that "unproductive" monks and nuns lived at the cost of the peasants is sometimes combined with the claim that the Tibetan government was also subsidized by the central government in Beijing. From 1952 to 1959 the subsidies from Beijing covered 89 percent of the income of the Tibetan government and in the early 1990s even more.[58] Such books also point out that the government under the leadership of the Dalai Lama spent more than half of its budget on religious affairs. The critique of the "unproductive" way of life in the monasteries must be seen in this context. Instead of feeding an "unproductive" population, organizing wasteful religious festivals, and burning tons of yak butter for religious purposes, the CCP used its resources for the modernization, education, and social progress of Tibet. This argument is at the core of the critique of traditional Tibetan society, in which food plays an important role as a metaphor.

Hunger is an important factor in the Tibet conflict. In the official Chinese narratives, memories of starvation are used to create versions of history that are focused on liberation. The Chinese sources emphasize the suffering of the PLA soldiers in their efforts to liberate Tibet and the great effort of the Chinese government to nourish the army and the indigenous people. The development of society and the uprisings in the Tibetan areas outside the Tibetan Autonomous Region are not a part of the official historiography on Tibet. In the official narrative,

the Tibetans are not victims of famine but oppressed people who were liberated from without by the PLA. Even in books that have been published in the reform era after 1978, the narrative of class struggle between the landlords and the "serfs" is still dominant. The old Tibetan elite and the monasteries are accused of hiding grain to starve the PLA. Furthermore, the monks and nuns are presented as "unproductive eaters" who caused an overwhelming burden for hungry peasants, and the democratic land reform after 1959 is considered the liberation from this burden. The argument that monks live at the expense of peasants is also combined with remarks that the local Tibetan government is highly dependent on subsidies from Beijing. This is a general critique of the traditional and "unproductive" Tibetan way of life. Furthermore, Chinese scholars downplay the loss of the Tibetan population between 1953 and 1964 that is visible in the official statistics and question the existence of a deadly famine in Tibet. At present, based on the available sources, it is not possible to determine whether or not a deadly famine occurred in Tibet in the 1960s. This is in sharp contrast to the general research on the Great Leap famine in China. Even official publications and statistics (such as the population surveys that are available for research) acknowledge a great loss of population. Furthermore, a new generation of scholars has questioned the natural alliance between the party and the peasants and the narrative of class struggle in the countryside.[59] However, for the Chinese government it is hard to acknowledge that for a long time after "liberation," the Tibetan peasants were still poor and food shortages occurred several times. The topic is so sensitive because of the tensions between Tibetans and Han Chinese that it seems safer for Chinese historians to stick to old narratives and preserve the taboo regarding the existence of famine in Tibet.

7 "Genocide against the Nation"
The Counter-Narratives of Tibetan and Ukrainian Nationalism

THE FAMINES FINALLY ENDED the honeymoon of the Socialist governments with local elites, as well as the most tolerant period of "indigenization." This crisis provided arguments for nationalist counter-narratives that challenged the official versions of history written by the Socialist states. In the Ukrainian and Tibetan cases, politicians and historians claim that the famines were produced on purpose by the occupying power, and the necessity of independence is presented as a natural result of the experience of famine. Some go so far as to define the famine as an act of genocide and part of a plan promoted by the foreign power to destroy the indigenous national culture. The introduction of the term "genocide" or "holocaust" allows the creation of a national identity based on collective victimhood rather than on national heroes or achievements.[1] As various food studies have shown, national and social identities are often constructed partly in terms of dietary practices: "We are what we eat." The rise of national cuisine developed as a parallel process to the nation building that took place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe and Latin America.[2] However, less is known about the relation between famine and national identity.

First, this chapter will show how nationalism is connected to experiences of famine. In the case of the Irish potato famine (1846–1850), Irish nationalists claimed that the British government used hunger to

destroy the nation. This argument is used later in the Ukrainian and Tibetan contexts as well. Second, it will show how and why hunger has an important function in the historical narratives promoted by the Tibetan government-in-exile. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama and Tibetan exiles use the argument that no famine occurred in old Tibet in order to attack Chinese rule. English-language memoirs and the website of the Tibetan government-in-exile will be analyzed. Third, the rise of the narrative of the "Ukrainian genocide" in the U.S. diaspora since the 1980s will be discussed. Despite harsh criticism in Western academia, this narrative became part of the official version of history after Ukrainian independence in 1991. Finally, the chapter will explore why negative events were chosen to create collective memory. This chapter is intended to contribute to an understanding of the politicization of hunger under socialism as well as to a demystification of national identities.

POLITICIZATION OF HUNGER AND NATIONALISM

The historian James Vernon argues that we should not take sympathy for the victims of famines for granted. In his book *Hunger: A Modern History*, he shows that in late Victorian Britain Thomas Malthus's idea that famines were a natural result of population growth in combination with limited resources was one that enjoyed great popular acceptance. Moreover, religious narratives viewed famines as a punishment sent by God for human sins. It was not an easy task to overcome the Malthusian framework, but the modern print media played an important role in presenting starvation as "news," especially to readers from the English middle class. Still, the hungry had become figures of humanitarian concern only by the last decades of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, nationalism contributed to the politicization of hunger. "In the hands of Irish and Indian nationalists, famine came to represent the inhumanity and incompetence of British rule: the British had promised free trade, prosperity, and civilization; they had delivered famine and pestilence. . . . Famine highlighted the moral strength of those who suffered; and unnecessary colonial famines mocked the universal pretensions of classical political economy. Here the nationalist use of famine to critique colonial rule became a claim to sovereignty: they willed a new nation into existence by documenting its collective suffering."[3] Between 12.2 and 29.3 million Indians starved to death under the Brit-

ish Empire between 1879 and 1902.[4] At that time, British officials such as George Nathaniel Curzon, the viceroy of India, claimed that famine in India was unavoidable because of the country's frequent natural disasters and rapid population growth. However, Indian economic thinkers challenged this paradigm and won victories in the conceptual domain. The discourse on poverty and famine shifted more and more from the sphere of nature to the field of political economy.[5] Recently, historian Mike Davis has gone so far as to name these famines "late Victorian holocausts," ascribing them to British *laissez faire* liberalism and its inability to deal with the climate changes caused by the El Niño ocean currents in the late nineteenth century.[6] Davis's book is a polemic against colonialism and neo-liberalism both.

The most prominent case of a nationalist interpretation is the Irish famine of 1846–1850. It was caused by several years of potato blight and crop failures, and at that time, large parts of the Irish laboring population lived almost exclusively on a diet of potatoes. As in many other cases, the response of the government was the key factor determining whether or not a famine would result in mass starvation and the death of thousands. By the time of the famine, Ireland was ruled by the British government in Westminster and had lost its own parliament. During the famine food was exported from Ireland to England, while at the same time, the British government imported Indian corn to Ireland to feed the starving population. However, many Irish peasants who were used to a potato diet did not know how to make the best use of the Indian corn.[7] The British government's relief program focused on public works to provide employment, and the infamous workhouses served as places to nourish and "educate" the poor. After this institution proved ineffective, in order to prevent mass starvation the British government under Sir John Russell established soup kitchens in March 1847, providing food to over 3 million people. In the autumn of that year, the government declared that the famine had passed its peak, and the soup kitchens were closed. At that time, infectious diseases were already widespread. The English print media in particular presented the famine relief efforts as a bottomless black hole, and senior government officials blamed the famine on the laziness of the Irish peasants and the unwillingness of the Irish landlords to modernize their estates. Ireland was supposed to bear the main burden of famine relief by itself.[8] The British government did not ignore the famine, but the relief

program was not one of its most urgent priorities. The net amount spent by Westminster on famine relief was about £7 million. In contrast to the hungry Irish population, slave owners in the West Indies received £20 million in compensation for the abolition of slavery in the 1830s.[9] As a result of the famine, the population of Ireland was reduced by 20–25 percent. Between 1.1 and 1.5 million people died, and another 2.1 million emigrated overseas between 1845 and 1851.[10]

Studies of Irish accounts have shown that in its aftermath many country people and Catholic clergymen interpreted the famine as an "act of God."[11] However, Irish nationalism politicized the famine, and the event played a prominent role in its narratives.[12] For example, in his 1861 book, *The Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)*, a well-known Irish nationalist, John Mitchel, writing from exile in the United States, portrayed the British government as ignorant and incompetent and expressed the view that the famine was used as a weapon to conquer the Irish nation. While cattle and wheat were being exported, the British government imported Indian corn into Ireland only in order to blind the people to the fact that England was exacting its tribute as usual. Mitchel estimated the death toll at 1.5 million. He came to his famous conclusion: "They died of hunger in the midst of abundance, which their own hands created. . . . Further, I have called it an artificial famine: that is to say, it was a famine which desolated a rich and fertile island, that produced every year abundance and superabundance to sustain all her people and many more. . . . The Almighty, indeed, sent the potato blight, but the English created the famine."[13] This emotional interpretation became popular because it made sense of suffering. The Irish nationalists could focus their attention on an outside force as the perpetrator instead of remembering the breakdown of the social order in Ireland and all its catastrophic results, such as increasing crime rates, prostitution, and cannibalism. Such an account could draw the line between the victim, Catholic Ireland, and the perpetrator, Protestant England, instead of acknowledging the fact that many Catholic landlords and head tenants also took advantage of the famine by dispossessing weaker Irish peasants of their land. Furthermore, the Protestant areas around Ulster were struck by the famine as well. Ó Gráda argues that during famines no one is innocent because the survival of some means the sacrifice of others, generally the weakest members of the

community.[14] Despite these contradictions, the narrative of the artificial famine "served the deep psychological and political needs of the post-Famine generations," as Peter Gray points out.[15] Especially for the Irish famine refugees in the United States, the nationalist narrative could provide a framework for maintaining the Irish and Catholic identity in a hostile environment. The nationalists blamed Protestant England for forcing them to leave their home country. Popular songs and ballads called for revenge for the mass starvation in the form of a struggle against England under the green flag.[16] All future Irish nationalist movements were heavily dependent on Irish American approval and funds. Although by the eve of World War I most eyewitnesses of the famine had passed away, songs, ballads, and newspaper articles kept the collective memory of the famine alive within the Irish population of 4.5 million in the U.S. diaspora.[17]

Since the early twentieth century the memory of the famine had been diminishing in importance in the collective memory in Ireland. However, this trend began to change around the 150th anniversary of the famine in 1995, when the Irish government funded a National Famine Commemoration Committee.[18] The pro-British parties in Northern Ireland and conservatives in England feared that the memories of the famines could still help the Irish Republican Army (IRA). An official acknowledgment and expression of regret for the role of the British government during the famine by Prime Minister Tony Blair at the 150th anniversary was widely criticized in England and Ireland as being unnecessary.[19] The president of Ireland, Mary Robinson, did not draw an anti-British lesson from the famine but emphasized Ireland's solidarity with starving people and refugees in developing countries in her address commemorating the anniversary.[20]

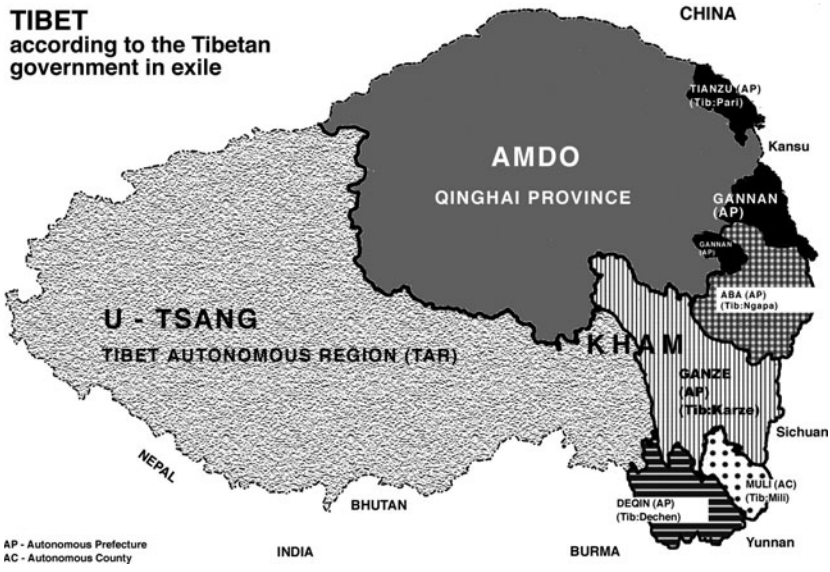
I have mentioned the importance of famine for Irish nationalists because it has some striking similarities with the Ukrainian and Tibetan cases. Nationalists in the diaspora developed the narrative that the occupiers created famine on purpose to harm or destroy the nation. The experience of hunger is used to draw ethical lines and present the independence of the nationality as necessary to prevent the recurrence of such a catastrophe. It seems that in all three cases not peasants but nationalist intellectuals were the driving force to create a collective memory of the famine.

HUNGER AND TIBETAN NATIONALISM

On both sides, that of the exiled Tibetans and that of the Chinese government, historical writing is used to create national identity. With the internationalization of the Tibet conflict since the 1980s, such works are targeted at a Western audience and are designed to mobilize support for the independence of Tibet. Since 1988, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama has been promoting the self-government of Tibet in association with the People's Republic of China, but the degree of autonomy the Dalai Lama advocates has thus far been unacceptable to the Chinese government.[21] In support of his goals, the Dalai Lama has created a nationalist counter-narrative to the official Chinese version of history that the Western media often repeat without any critical examination.

In Dharamsala, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama established a Tibetan government-in-exile. Various scholars have argued that the people in Tibet hardly considered themselves a nation before 1951 and that nationalism developed mainly in exile. "In Benedict Anderson's terms, the Chinese incursion into Tibet, their shared sufferings under Chinese rule, and the experience of being forced to live together in exile have allowed them to 'imagine' themselves as Tibetans, rather than as Khampas, Amdowas, Golokpas, and so on and have also made it possible to think of people from distant regions of the Tibetan plateau as compatriots."[22] The Tibetan government-in-exile created a secular nationalism that is linked to religious symbols. Every year the government organizes a national ceremony on March 10, the day of the uprising in 1959. In the schools, patriotic education based on symbols like the flag and national songs is enforced. Nationalism has also been enforced by the introduction of the central Tibet Lhasa dialect as the national language, along with the promotion of ethnic endogamy and high birthrates. Furthermore, the government discourages the Tibetans from assimilating with the host population.[23]

The Tibetan government-in-exile's definition of Tibet is very different from that of the Chinese government. The latter identifies Tibet with the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), established in 1965. This region is called U-Tsang by the Tibetan government-in-exile and represents the part that was traditionally the fiefdom of Lhasa and the Dalai Lama. (In the following, I will use the term "Tibet" to mean the TAR.) Unlike Beijing, the exile government defines the Tibetan nation



as all that is within the boundaries of "ethnic Tibet" or "Greater Tibet," which includes Kham and Amdo. These regions are located in the provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan. "Greater Tibet" would cover almost one-fourth of the geographic area of the Chinese state, and the Tibetans represent less than 50 percent of the population of that area. Important parts of Kham were already placed under the administration of Sichuan in 1728 by the Qing government.[24] However, the Tibetan government-in-exile has established the myth that the Communists divided Tibet into five provinces in order to harm it. The narrative and statistics of victims under "Chinese rule," as proposed by the exile government, has included the Tibetans in Amdo and Kham. As in the case of the Ukrainian famine, the remembering of the suffering of all Tibetans serves the effort to create national identity and the mapping of the nation.

THE MASTER NARRATIVE: "NO FAMINE BEFORE THE CHINESE CAME"

In nationalist Tibetan historiography, suffering under "Chinese rule" plays the major role. The central arguments of this narrative were

established by the Fourteenth Dalai Lama in his autobiography, *My Land and My People*, in 1962. The key argument is that the Tibetans were forced to sign the 17 Point Agreement and to collaborate with the Chinese. After what is referred to as the "illegal occupation," Tibet was transformed into a Chinese colony. During his political career in exile, the Dalai Lama has accused the Chinese government of "holocaust," "genocide," "the rape of Tibet," and "cultural genocide."[25] He considers a famine that took place in U-Tsang, Kham, and Amdo part of this genocide. According to official exile statistics, over 1.2 million Tibetans died as a result of the Chinese "occupation" between 1949 and 1979, of whom 342,970 starved to death. The statistics cite 131,072 deaths by starvation in U-Tsang, 89,916 in Kham, and 121,982 in Amdo.[26] A further 680,000 Tibetans are said to have been killed in battle with Chinese troops or executed. This number too is not possible to verify. According to a Chinese publication that was later withdrawn from circulation, 93,000 Tibetan "rebels" died, were wounded, or were imprisoned between 1959 and 1961.[27] During that time, the Tibetan government still had an army of its own, and thousands of guerrilla fighters were hiding in the mountains.

In the 1962 autobiography, the Dalai Lama wrote, "First, although our territory was large, there were only 7 or 8 million Tibetans and over 600 million Chinese. . . . They often suffered from famine, and they wanted Tibet as extra living space. In fact, they have already settled hordes of Chinese peasants in Tibet, and I have no doubt they look forward to a time when Tibetans will be an insignificant minority. Meanwhile, Tibetan peasants are reduced to conditions worse than those of the peasants of the conquering race. There had never been famine in Tibet, in all its recorded history, but there is famine now."[28] The Chinese statistics, by contrast, show a Tibetan population of only 2,753,000 in 1953 and 2,501,000 in 1964 in all of China.[29] The language reminds one of the anti-Communist stereotypes during the Cold War predicting that "yellow hordes" would penetrate the occident as a "conquering race." Despite the increase of Han Chinese migration to the cities in Tibet, at no time after 1951 did the Chinese government allow a large number of Han peasants to settle in the region and cultivate land. The argument that "they want our space for their hungry peasants" lacks any historical evidence. However, the argument that no famine occurred in the traditional Tibetan society is repeated over and

over again. On the official website of the government-in-exile one can read: "Year after year, the Chinese Government claims great economic advancement in Tibet; bumper crops, industrial growth, improvement of infrastructure and so forth. These claims were made even when Tibet was suffering its only famines in the nation's recorded history (1961–1964 and 1968–1973). . . . In the periods 1961–1964 and 1968–1973 famine became widespread in Tibet's pastoral areas. Thousands upon thousands of Tibetans had to survive on rodents, dogs, worms and whatever they could forage for survival."[30] As in the case of the Irish famine, the exiled Tibetans argue that the occupiers forced them to eat things that humiliated them as human beings. The Tibetans were reduced to a "nation of *tsampa* beggars."

The same report claims the following: "Famine and starvation were unheard of in independent Tibet. There were, of course, years of poor harvest and crop failures. But people could easily borrow from the buffer stock held by the district administrations, monasteries, aristocrats and rich farmers. . . . From 1950 onwards, the Chinese military and civilian personnel were fed on the state buffer stocks and, they forced the Tibetan populace to sell their personal holding of grains to them at nominal prices."[31] The claim that the Tibetans faced starvation because they had to nourish the PLA is another frequent argument in the narrative of the Tibetan exile. In *The Story of Tibet: Conversations with His Holiness the Dalai Lama*, Thomas Laird goes so far as to state that after the PLA's march into Lhasa in 1951, it stopped paying for grain altogether and began requisitions without compensation.[32] In contrast to Laird, Chinese sources claim that grain was even imported over India to meet the demands of the PLA without burdening the Tibetan population.

The claim that no famine occurred in traditional Tibetan society appeared as early as 1962 in the most important Tibetan document on the famine of the Great Leap Forward, the seventy-thousand-character petition of the Tenth Panchen Lama to the Chinese government. This document, first published in its full version in London in 1997, is one of the most open descriptions of the famine by a high-ranking PRC official.[33] After the escape of the Dalai Lama to India in 1959, the Panchen Lama was appointed chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the TAR. Unlike the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama officially welcomed the PLA's crackdown of the uprising and supported the subsequent

"democratic reforms." For this reason many exiled Tibetans long considered the Panchen Lama a "Chinese puppet." In the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward, the Panchen Lama made an inspection tour of the Tibetan-speaking areas in Sichuan, Qinghai, Yunnan, and Gansu. In contrast to Tibet (U-Tsang), which was excluded from the Great Leap, the Tibetans in Amdo and Kham experienced all the campaigns, such as the introduction of the People's Communes, the public dining halls, and the steel campaign. The report of the Panchen Lama was written carefully in the language of a state official. While the report acknowledged the improvements in the food supply and the moderate taxation in Tibet, it drew a horrifying picture of mass starvation and political repression in the "brother provinces."[34] Peasants told the Panchen Lama that they received only five kilos of grain per person a month or even less. People started to eat the fodder for horses and donkeys, along with grass roots and grass seeds. "After processing this, they mixed it with a bit of foodstuffs, made it into a thin gruel like pig food and gave it to people to eat, and even this was limited in amount and could not fill their stomachs. Because the anguish of such severe hunger had never been experienced in Tibetan history and was such that people could not imagine it even in their dreams, the masses could not resist this kind of cruel torment."[35] This statement implies that the Tibetan herdsmen and peasants had serious difficulties dealing with famine because they had never before experienced this kind of hunger. The Panchen Lama warned: "For a period, because the life of the masses was poverty-stricken and miserable, many people, principally the young and old, died of starvation. . . . Consequently, there has been an evident and severe reduction in the present-day Tibetan population." This development was a "great threat to the continued existence of the Tibetan nationality, which was sinking into a state close to death."[36] The report linked the famine with the threat to the existence of the Tibetan nationality and its culture. Without specific use of the term, this description comes close to the definition of genocide.

HUNGRY FOR BUTTER TEA: FOOD IN THE MEMORIES OF TIBETAN EXILES

In the memoirs of Tibetan exiles, food and hunger play a surprisingly important role. In this context, I will analyze the narrative of food and

hunger in four memoirs: *New Tibet: Memoirs of a Graduate of the Peking Institute of National Minorities*, by Tsering Dorje Gashi; *Red Star over Tibet*, by Dawa Norbu; *Life in the Red Flag People's Commune*, by Dhondub Choedon; and *Memories of Life in Lhasa under Chinese Rule*, by Tubten Khetsun. The first three eyewitnesses worked for the Chinese state and fled to India during the Cultural Revolution. Their memoirs, which were translated into English and addressed to a Western audience, were published a decade before the Tibet issue became internationalized and before the rise of the Dalai Lama as a global celebrity. Tubten Khetsun's account was published in 2008.

In his book Tsering Dorje Gashi describes the transformation of his eating habits while he was studying in the mid-1950s at the elite Institute of National Minorities for the training of minority cadres. After his arrival in Beijing the older students offered him hot water in cups and told him jokingly, "Nowadays we do not have to dirty ourselves by lot [*sic*] of grease and oil as we used to do in Tibet. We need not trouble ourselves with luxuries like butter tea."[37] In the propaganda of the CCP, the consumption of butter tea and the burning of yak butter for religious purposes served as symbols of waste and corruption in the traditional Tibetan society. Some students argued against religion: "Religion is poison. Religion has given us neither anything to eat nor drink. On the contrary *tsampa* and butter have to be wasted as offerings to images of mud and bronze."[38] In his memoirs, Dawa Norbu describes the situation in the rural cooperative near Xigaze after the "democratic reforms" in 1959. The tea that was served was now black and bitter. According to him, they were not allowed to drink *chang* any more because it was considered "anti-Motherland sabotage."[39] The Tibetans had to learn to make self-criticisms of their "wasteful" habits. A peasant woman said: "How foolish and backward I have been to waste butter on the lamps before my altar, when I don't have butter for my tea."[40] Dawa Norbu acknowledges that in the past Tibetan workers could drink thick buttered tea and strong *chang* only on special days. But now the situation had become worse, and the "Chinese overlords" had driven the Tibetan workers to despair and hunger. In contrast to the Chinese propaganda, Tibetans described how the critique of buttered tea and the reduction of food to starvation rations went hand in hand. Dawa Norbu mentions the joke that "the two reductions" (on loans and interest rates, according to the CCP) would turn out to be on *chang* and tea.

Dhondub Choedon, who belonged to the serf class *(wulagpas)* and had served as a local cadre in the rural cooperative, describes how the Chinese introduced a system to save food after the establishment of the People's Communes in 1965. The peasants were required to draw up budgets that were too low to feed a family adequately. "The Chinese will then ask: how will you live by this amount? We have to answer: not eating dry but drinking liquid—meaning we will not eat *pahg* (tsampa dough) but drink *thugpa* (porridge type); substituting greens for grains—less grains and more vegetables; drinking no chang and eating no '*Yoe*' (roasted barley)—because, the Chinese say, it is not food and hence a waste."[41] This narrative also appears in *Tibet under Chinese Communist Rule: A Compilation of Refugee Statements 1958–1975*. This volume, published by the Tibetan government-in-exile, includes a statement by Tesum, a former beggar who fled to Katmandu in 1961. He recounts that after the distribution of alms after the death of the head of a wealthy family, forty Tibetans cooked *thukpa* outside his house; the Chinese accused them of wasting food by practicing "reactionary" customs.[42]

The idea of reforming eating habits in order to accumulate resources for the modernization of the country is quite typical for the whole Mao era. Under the slogan "Eat less to build the country" *(shaochi jianguo)*, the party expected sacrifice from every citizen and launched several campaigns to save grain. For example, during the famine of the Great Leap in 1960, the government called on the population to save food. Another famous example is the campaign "Prepare for war, prepare for famine, for the people" *(beizhan, beihuang, wei renmin)*, in which the population was educated to prevent any waste of food. Dhondub Choedon describes this regime of saving and sacrifice in ethnic terms, arguing that the Chinese forced the Tibetans to change their eating habits to include drinking watery porridge and eating more vegetables, a change intended for the exploitation of Tibet.

Let us now focus on the presentation of famine in the Tibetan exile memoirs. Tsering Dorje Gashi personally experienced the famine of the Great Leap Forward in Beijing. By the end of 1959, the relatively ample food supply was reduced to a ration that was just enough for twenty-five days a month. The authorities at the Institute of National Minorities told the students that the country was going through a difficult time and only by their eating less and increasing their inner strength

could the country overcome hardship. The students were exhorted to remember the suffering of the Long March, when the soldiers of the Red Army were forced to eat dead bodies, horses, and dogs.[43] While it seems unlikely that a party official would talk about cannibalism in the Red Army, this argument resembles the narrative of the PLA soldiers who marched into Tibet in 1951; for the sake of the unity of the motherland, they tightened their belts and even resorted to eating mice. When the party sent the Tibetan students back to Tibet in the winter of 1961, Tsering Dorje Gashi realized that the situation in the countryside was much worse. The railway station in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province, was filled with starving people. Nobody gave food to the starving or helped one another. After working for the *Xizang Ribao* (Tibetan Daily), he went back to his hometown of Phari in the south of Tibet, near the Indian border. He became more and more disillusioned with the New Tibet after he became aware of the level of political oppression and the low standard of living. Even though his family could hardly subsist on the food rations, he emphasized that Phari was much better off than the rest of Tibet because border areas were allowed to cultivate larger private plots and they did not have to pay the "patriotic grain tax" and the "surplus grain sales tax."[44] In 1966 Tsering Dorje Gashi fled to India. Like him, Dawa Norbu does not mention death by starvation in his memoirs, but he describes hunger in detail. According to him, the harvest of 1959 was excellent, but the peasants were hungry. In the past, the peasants were able to borrow grain from the upper classes and the rich, but this practice came under attack during the "democratic reforms" because of the extraordinarily high interest rates. He remembers that the peasants asked "the Chinese" to borrow grain from the people's granaries, but the authorities refused the request. Using an almost Marxist argument, he points out that he supported the land reform and the distribution of wealth among the poor, but he realized that "the Tibetan proletariat received mainly useless objects, while the real wealth was taken by the Chinese."[45] He concludes that China would "milk" Tibet.

Dhondub Choedon's memoir is also packed with complaints about low food rations and hunger. As did Dawa Norbu, she claims that despite the improvement of production after 1959, the Chinese did not feed the people adequately. She describes in detail the working and living conditions in the Red Flag Commune, established in 1965. "Since

essential items like meat, butter and oil are very scarce more foodgrain has to be eaten to make up for our bodily requirements. But where can one get more foodgrain? Especially in summer and autumn we have to cut down our intake of foodgrain and eat lots of wild vegetables. On many occasions this scarcity of food made people's faeces odourless and greenish, which no outsider would have recognized. Many people became sick and their faces got swollen. Many died of starvation."[46] As one finds in the Chinese propaganda, she proceeds with a comparison of the food supply in the past and present. Unlike the Chinese narrative, she uses data concerning food rationing to show that the Tibetans had less to eat after the "democratic reforms" and the establishment of the People's Communes. Paradoxically, the Chinese organized sessions of "remembering bitterness," in which the Tibetans were compelled to "recall" the hunger of the past. "They even introduced all over Tibet a 'Dug-gnal Drenso Thugpa' or Remembering-Sufferings *Thugpa*—a watery thin porridge of tsampa, without salt, which is given to all Tibetans to drink. . . . During this occasion, some Tibetan youths will ask their elders: Was this what you really received in the old society? They have to answer: The masses had only this type of thugpa because the . . . serf-owners gorged themselves during extravagant banquets."[47] The party introduced the practice of "remembering bitterness" during the land reform in order to launch a class struggle in the villages, and according to Dhondub Choedon, the cadres even prepared watery porridge in order to demonstrate the terrible level of consumption in the "old society."

Tubten Khetsun's memoir of life in Lhasa and in the countryside was published over twenty years after the books mentioned above. However, the narrative is similar, and here too hunger plays an important role. He writes that many Tibetan peasants had to go hungry for half the year due to exploitation by the Chinese authorities. Hunger, heavy labor, and minimal medical facilities caused a high proportion of early deaths among the rural population. Even the young people often looked like they were over fifty.[48] Tubten Khetsun also describes how "class enemies" were attacked for making traditional Tibetan offerings during the New Year celebrations. He even claims that Tibetans were poisoned because the Chinese often distributed stale *tsampa* to the inhabitants of Lhasa during the Cultural Revolution. Sometimes, the smell filled the whole city. "Likewise, having to eat stale *tsampa* for long periods gave many people stomach pain, and many of them went to the hospitals for treatment. Indeed, if one were to list the various

types of illness at that time, stale *tsampa* would definitely account for the highest percentage, but there was no way for anyone to say that it was a cause of illness."[49]

The memoirs of Tsering Dorje Gashi, Dawa Norbu, Dhondub Choedon, and Tubten Khetsun in some ways fall within the framework of the master narrative that the Dalai Lama established in his autobiography, whereby the Chinese occupied Tibet and exploited the country for their own good while the standard of living of the Tibetans was reduced to the level of starvation. Indeed, the books by Tsering Dorje Gashi and Dhondub Choedon were published by the Information Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. However, the stories differ to some extent from the Tibetan exile narrative of today. The authors discussed here set the focus not on the abuse of human rights and genocide but on the hardships of the Tibetan population and its struggle against hunger. The main accusation against the "Chinese masters" is that they betrayed their own ideals and did nothing to improve the standard of living, and the fact that Tsering Dorje Gashi, Dawa Norbu, and Dhondub Choedon all emphasize their own earlier belief in the Chinese modernization effort makes their arguments even stronger.

The journalist Jasper Becker, who interviewed some eyewitnesses of the famine of the Great Leap Forward, makes a comparison with Ireland. According to Becker, cadres not only forced Tibetan nomads to settle in Amdo, but also forced them to eat unfamiliar and unsuitable grains instead of *tsampa*. "Much like the peasants in Ireland, who could not make bread from the wheat imported after the potato crop failed, the Tibetans, especially the nomads, had no idea how to eat wheat or maize. And, while many Chinese peasants knew from experience how to endure famine, this was a hardship virtually unknown among the Tibetans."[50] On the one hand, Becker reflects the two standard arguments of the Tibetan exile discourse ("No famine in independent Tibet" and "They forced us to eat strange things"). On the other hand, Becker also mentions that more Tibetans would have died if the Han Chinese immigrants had not taught them how to eat wild leaves and grasses. According to Becker, the Tibetans and Han alike suffered in Gansu, Qinghai, and Sichuan. This conclusion contrasts with the memories of the Tibetan exiles, in which a distinction is drawn between the Tibetans and the "Chinese masters." Despite the fact that famine hit all the nationalities, the Tibetan authors use food habits and hunger to draw ethical lines in their narratives.

HUNGER AS A WEAPON? THE RISE OF THE POST-SOCIALIST NARRATIVE OF THE UKRAINIAN FAMINE

Memory of famine is even more central in the Ukrainian historiography than in the Tibetan. Even today, the famine of 1931–1933 is a very controversial issue between Russia and Ukraine. While Russian historians and politicians insist that this tragedy was part of the Soviet famine in the aftermath of the collectivization of agriculture, many Ukrainian historians and supporters of the genocide thesis in Western academia try to dissociate the event from Soviet history and integrate it into a national Ukrainian history. In this section, I will show how the narrative of the famine as genocide developed and why it became so important in post-Socialist Ukraine.

As long as Stalin lived, the famine was a taboo topic in the Soviet Union, and people who mentioned it could face serious repercussions. Under the occupation of Ukraine by Nazi Germany in 1941 the famine became a permitted topic, and Ukrainian nationalists began to use the event as anti-Russian and anti-Semitic propaganda.[51] In the atmosphere of the Cold War in the early 1950s, Ukrainian nationalists in the Western diaspora published the two-volume *Black Deeds of the Kremlin*.[52] At that time, only a little was known about the famine, and some of the sources that were used had been published by the Nazi occupiers and their collaborators. For a long time, even Western scholars treated the famine as a secondary event in the history of the Soviet Union.[53] The loss of livestock during the collectivization of agriculture after 1929 was discussed in more detail than the human losses. As late as the 1980s, the catastrophe became an international topic as a "Ukrainian genocide." In 1985, the U.S. Congress appointed a commission under the leadership of James Mace to investigate the event, perhaps because the Reagan administration hoped to activate Ukrainian nationalist forces against the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian diaspora played an important role in placing the famine on the agenda.[54] With the establishment of research institutes for Ukrainian studies at Harvard University (1972) and the University of Alberta (1976) through donations by Ukrainian communities and lobbying efforts, Ukrainian history and diaspora views got more attention. The scholars in the diaspora also created a new word, Holodomor, for the Ukrainian famine. The closest English

translation for Holodomor is "hunger plague," and to Western ears it sounds similar to the word "holocaust."

In 1987, *The Harvest of Sorrow*, by the historian Robert Conquest, received international attention. Conquest promoted the terms "hunger holocaust" and "terror famine." According to his central thesis, Stalin produced the famine on purpose to crack down on the resistance of the Ukrainians against Soviet oppression. In the introduction to his book, Conquest compared Ukraine during the famine with Bergen-Belsen, where a hungry population was watched by well-fed guards. Even though Stalin was aware of the starvation, he did not open the grain stocks and upheld high grain quotas.[55] The argument that Stalin produced the famine on purpose to punish the peasants had already been raised in 1933 by Otto Schiller, an agricultural expert from the German Embassy in Moscow.[56] In his book, Conquest raised the question of whether Soviet policies fulfilled the criteria of genocide. In 1948, the United Nations enacted the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," which defined genocide as follows: "Genocide means any . . . acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such."[57]

In 1988, the Mace commission on the Ukrainian famine presented its report to the U.S. Congress. The report was written like a state-of-the-art review and summarized the "non-Soviet scholarship," "post-Stalinist Soviet historiography," and "Soviet fiction on the famine" and also included an oral history project with survivors. While the chapters were written in scholarly language, the political conclusions were presented in an executive summary. The commission found that a famine that caused the death of millions had occurred in Ukraine in 1932–1933 and that it had been man-made by the Soviet government. More important was the thesis that Stalin had produced the famine on purpose: "8. In the fall of 1932 Stalin used the resulting 'procurements crisis' in Ukraine as an excuse to tighten his control in Ukraine and to intensify grain seizures further. . . . 11. Stalin knew that people were starving to death in Ukraine by late 1932."[58] The authors of the report believed that a famine had also taken place in the Volga Basin and the North Caucasus, but Stalin's interventions were invasive only in the ethnically Ukrainian regions. Point 16 stated that "Joseph Stalin and those around him committed genocide against Ukrainians in 1932–1933."

The last point accused the American government and journalists during that period of ignoring the famine. In my opinion, the conclusion that Stalin committed genocide can hardly be drawn from the report. Unlike Conquest's book, the report was primarily based on Soviet sources. Perhaps without realizing it, the authors of the report somehow came to similar conclusions as the historians of the Khrushchev era. Instead of blaming the Communist Party or the Soviet government, they put Stalin on trial and made negative mention of Khrushchev's opponents, Vyacheslav Molotov and Lazar Kaganovich.

It seems that in 1988, whether or not the famine should be called genocide was not the central question that it later became. James Mace pointed out that the famine posed particular problems from the standpoint of internationally accepted definitions of genocide "since its focus was geographic rather than discriminatory against specific groups within a given area, and it was clearly not an attempt to destroy all members of a given group."[59] Rather, the famine should be seen within the context of the harsh policies against the main victims, the Ukrainians.

The definition of genocide is still controversial. R. J. Rummel suggests using the term "democide" to describe the murder of any person or people by a government with methods that cause death in order to fulfill a quota or requisition system.[60] Kurt Jonassohn differentiates between two kinds of man-made famines. The first is the unintended consequence of economic, political, and social processes, whereas the second is a result of the age-old international use of hunger as a means of conflict and warfare.[61]

In *Stalin's Genocides*, Norman M. Naimark describes the problems with adopting the 1948 U.N. definition of genocide for the crimes under Stalin's rule. He believes that social and political groups were not included in the definition because of a strong focus in the United Nations on the racist crimes of the Nazi regime but also as a result of pressure from the Soviet government.[62] It would be necessary to use the term "genocide" in a broader and more flexible way than in the U.N. resolution. The killing of part of a group should be considered as genocide if this action threatens the existence of the whole group. For example, the International Tribunal in The Hague labeled as genocide the murder of eight thousand Muslims by military units of the Bosnian Serbs in Srebrenica in 1995. Naimark acknowledges that at the mo-

ment very little evidence is available that Stalin personally ordered a deadly famine.[63] Therefore, it would not be possible to bring him before an international tribunal were he still alive. However, this does not mean that the event itself could not be labeled as genocide. Naimark argues that Stalin did not want to kill or deport all Ukrainians, but he did want to destroy Ukraine as a nation. The team around Stalin would have believed that peasants who considered themselves Ukrainians deserved to die. The case of Srebrenica shows that a massacre could be labeled as genocide even in the absence of proof that particular persons were responsible for this crime.

Another problem is that the use of hunger in warfare was outlawed relatively recently. In 1974, the World Food Conference in Rome passed resolutions to outlaw starvation as a means of warfare, a tactic that has been used in many conflicts in Africa. According to the U.N. definition, the standard for genocide is met only if a government intends to exterminate a population or group as a whole. David Marcus argues that existing international law is not flexible enough to deal with famine crimes: concrete prohibitions against starving civilians have existed only in the context of warfare and the Geneva Conventions since 1977. In consequence, Marcus calls for a reform of international law.[64]

The difficulty for the supporters of the genocide thesis is in defining the famine as a particular event of Ukrainian national history. The arguments of the supporters vary. Some argue that the whole famine was organized on purpose as genocide by the Soviet government. Other scholars, such as Marcus, admit that the U.N. definition does not fit the Ukrainian famine and believe therefore that the definition of genocide should be changed. Scholars such as James E. Mace, Andrea Graziosi, and Timothy Snyder argue that the famine of 1931 affected the whole Soviet Union as a result of collectivization and government mismanagement and that it was not organized intentionally. However, after the famine broke out, Stalin used hunger to kill millions of Ukrainian peasants.[65] The Soviet famine, they argue, turned in late 1932 into the Ukrainian Holodomor. In an early work, Mace argued: "The year 1933 was difficult for all Soviet peasants, but mass death from starvation seems to have been confined to Ukraine, the North Caucasus *krai*, and parts of the Volga region, the latter perhaps in hopes of weakening the Volga Germans. Along the border with Russia proper (as distinct from the Kuban), the famine seems to have stopped right at the border."[66]

Today, we know that many Russian peasants also starved to death.[67] The excess mortality also increased rapidly in 1933 compared to 1932 in regions with mainly Russian population, such as the Lower Volga, Central Volga, and Central Black Earth Region.[68] Because this fact cannot be denied, some supporters of the genocide thesis claim that in response to the underfulfillment of grain quotas, the Soviet authorities enforced very cruel punishments, such as food boycotts and economic blockades, only in regions that were populated with Ukrainians, especially Kuban. This region was part of the Russian Soviet Republic and belongs to Russia today. For example, Roman Serbyn notes that Stalin decided to close the Russian-Ukrainian border and ordered that fleeing peasants be sent back to their starving villages.[69] Snyder argues that very cruel policies were applied only, or mainly, in Soviet Ukraine in late 1932 or early 1933. These policies included a meat tax in cases where the grain quotas were not fulfilled. According to Snyder, the Soviet authorities introduced the "black list" system in November 1932, whereby villages that were blacklisted lost the right to trade and did not receive any food deliveries from outside.[70]

As noted above, in academia, the genocide thesis does not go unquestioned, and the camp of scholars who oppose it is at least as large as the camp of supporters. Davies, Wheatcroft, and Tauger consider the event a Soviet famine rather than a Ukrainian famine.[71] They do not believe that the famine was used to commit genocide against Ukrainians in 1932–1933. Generally speaking, on the one hand, the victims of the famine were not only Ukrainians, but also Kazakhs, Russians, and Germans. On the other hand, at the local level Ukrainians often acted as grain hunters and perpetrators.[72] Furthermore, not all Soviet leaders from the central government were Russians. Stalin was Georgian, and Kaganovich was born to Jewish parents in Ukraine. Such facts make it much more difficult to draw ethnic lines between Russian perpetrators and Ukrainian victims. Wheatcroft argues that Ukraine became the major target of violent grain collections relatively late, starting only with the harvest of 1931.[73] In the beginning of the food crisis in 1928, Stalin chose Siberia in which to use "extraordinary measures"—meaning violence—to extract grain from the peasants. During that crisis Ukraine received aid from the other republics after a harvest failure.[74] In 1931, the Kazak steppes were a major locus of famine death. In the early 1930s, not only Ukraine, but all Soviet republics experienced a

purge against "national Communists." Kuromiya believes that it is difficult to argue that the closing of the Russian borders with Ukraine and Northern Caucasus in 1933 was specifically directed against ethnic Ukrainians because both ethnic Ukrainians and Russians lived on both sides of the border. Since peasants were not issued internal passports, and it was difficult for border guards to distinguish between the two nationalities. One could argue that Ukraine and North Caucasus were punished as territorial units, but there can be no clear answer yet as to whether ethnic Ukrainians in ethnically mixed areas suffered more than their non-Ukrainian neighbors.[75]

Interestingly, supporters of the genocide thesis date the policy of slaughtering the Ukrainian nation to the period between late 1932 and the first half of 1933. This was months after the Soviet government had already lowered the grain quotas for the Ukrainian Soviet Republic several times. In May 1932, the government published procurement quotas that were about 20 percent lower than in 1931. In August, the regime cut the procurement quotas sharply for the North Caucasus and Ukraine.[76] In January 1933, the Politburo made another concession and reduced the annual grain plan for the Ukraine.[77] However, it should be noted that the grain quotas were still too high for the hungry countryside. Because the targets that had already been lowered were hardly fulfilled, Stalin and the Soviet government became very frustrated and blamed the failure on sabotage by "counterrevolutionary" forces. As a result, the relaxation of the peasants' burden followed waves of repressions, including deportations of whole villages, death penalties for unsuccessful local cadres, and mass arrests of peasants. Furthermore, kolkhoz trade in grain was not permitted anywhere in Ukraine or the North Caucasus as a punishment for the fact that the grain collections plans had not been completed.[78] However, Davies and Wheatcroft have shown that the punishment of "black-listing" villages was also enforced in the Central Volga region in Russia. Furthermore, this measure was introduced as early as the grain campaign in the autumn of 1929.[79] According to Davies and Wheatcroft, these general punishments of peasants cannot be considered as genocide against Ukrainians.

Snyder labels the final grain collection in Ukraine in early 1933 as the mass murder of 3 million people. By contrast, Tauger has argued that a serious discussion of the famine must consider all the groups that were involved in the supply system, not just the peasants and the

government.[80] Many supporters of the genocide thesis ignore the need of the Soviet government to feed the rapidly increasing urban population, including the Ukrainian cities. Snyder also describes the suffering of the cities, but it seems that he does not see any connection between the grain procurement in the countryside and the urban supply. As mentioned above, the well-being of the rural population had a lower priority for the Soviet government than maintaining stability in the cities. If it was Stalin's goal to kill as many Ukrainian peasants as possible, why did he lower the grain quotas and introduce reforms in the kolkhozes allowing peasants to have private plots and cattle and allowing local markets to reopen?

As so often, the debates inside academia have had little impact on the historical consciousness of wider audiences. Even though the genocide thesis was not the central topic of debate during the 1980s and was questioned by numerous scholars, the narrative of purposeful genocide by Stalin became a part of the national identity of Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union.

THE REGIME CHANGE OF MEMORY: THE HOLODOMOR AS GENOCIDE IN POST-SOCIALIST HISTORIOGRAPHY IN UKRAINE

During the final crisis of the Soviet Union and with the founding of an independent Ukrainian state in 1991, the famine became a significant issue. At a symposium in 1990, politicians, historians, and artists passed a resolution that the famine should be seen as genocide against the Ukrainian people.[81] Remarkably, intellectuals and politicians who opposed the official Soviet historiography thus used the same methods as the Communist Party by asserting the "truth" with a resolution.

In the following years, a new canon was established that regarded the Holodomor as genocide. The first elected president of Ukraine, Leonid M. Kravchuk, declared in 1992 that the Ukrainians had suffered more than anybody else under the Stalinist regime. Against the background of the genocide thesis, Ukrainians could be established as first-class victims of Stalinism. Beginning in 1998, the fourth Sunday in November was introduced as a public commemoration of the famine.

The seventieth anniversary of the famine marked a new high tide for its commemoration. In 2002–2003, the Ukrainian foreign ministry

launched a campaign for the international community to acknowledge the famine as genocide. Even though the campaign did not reach all its goals, twenty-six states belonging to the United Nations, including Russia, passed a declaration defining the famine as a national tragedy that caused 7–10 million deaths in the Soviet Union. The U.S. Congress passed a "Resolution on the 1932–1933 Man-Made Famine in Ukraine" that referred to the genocide thesis, and the Senate of Canada passed a "Resolution on the Ukrainian Famine/Genocide."[82]

Although the Ukrainians were not the only ones who starved to death, the famine is not a central topic of debate in Russia or Kazakhstan. Wilfried Jilge argues that the Holodomor was able to become the key event in Ukrainian historiography because it legitimized the unity of the state and its independence from Russia. Politicians even justified freedom of the press and the reintroduction of private property with the argument that these institutions could prevent a famine.[83] After independence, the nuclear catastrophe at Chernobyl was also used as a symbol of the victimization of the Ukrainians under Soviet rule. "The Famine savagely killed off peasants as Chernobyl viciously poisoned the land. For a peasant-based people, this meant the nation and its 'soul' had been destroyed."[84] Catherine Wanner thus argues that emotional narratives of common experiences can be seen as a way to create a new identity in a highly diverse and disenfranchised population.[85]

Andreas Kappeler has argued that with the exception of Galicia, Ukraine does not have a strong tradition of Russophobia.[86] Despite the official definition of the famine as genocide, the political division of Ukraine into a pro-European west and a pro-Russian east is reflected in the area of memory. President Viktor Yushchenko, who served from 2005 to 2010, promoted a law that defined the famine as an act of genocide. Yushchenko's base of support and power was the center-west of the country. The Ukrainian parliament passed such a law in November 2006. By contrast, the Party of Regions of former prime minister and president Viktor Yanukovych opposed the bill and said that the famine was a "tragedy." Furthermore, an opinion poll conducted by the Kiev Institute of Sociology showed that a much higher percentage of interviewees in the west than in the east believed that the Soviet government organized the famine deliberately. It is most striking that the strongest support for the genocide interpretation came from a region that had

largely escaped the famine because it was not part of the Soviet Union at the time.[87] The facts that Russians, Germans, and Poles also starved to death in Ukraine and that perpetrators on the local level were mainly Ukrainians are hardly mentioned.[88] The Ukrainian nationalists have constructed the nation as a community of victims that includes the Ukrainians beyond the borders of the nation-state; the government in Kiev has tried to rewrite the histories of the multi-ethnic borderlands as Ukrainian national history. The Holodomor plays an important role in this context.

The genocide discourse came from outside the country. The research and debates on the Ukrainian famine in the United States and Canada during the 1980s set up the framework for the new historiography of independent Ukraine. This narrative proved successful because the discussion crossed the borders of intra-academic debates. The genocide narrative was able to take up the memories of suffering in Ukrainian villages and families. Furthermore, the definition of the famine as genocide or holocaust linked the topic with the international discourse about human rights. Levy and Sznaider have promoted the thesis that the Holocaust has become a universal container for the memories of diverse victim groups since the 1990s. With the internationalization and Americanization of the Holocaust, the event has been taken out of the national context of German and European history and made into a metaphor of universal evil. Against the background of the moral imperative of these universalized memories of the Holocaust, all victims are innocent by definition.[89] The historical narratives of the first modernity, which praised heroes and their sacrifices for the nation, have been replaced by narratives of victimhood in the second modernity. "Never again" became the moral imperative that prohibits governments from slaughtering their own populations. During the Balkan wars of 1995 and 1999, the Holocaust was instrumentalized by the U.S. and German governments to justify the war against Yugoslavia.[90]

The case of Ukraine shows that an analogy to genocide and holocaust can serve the purpose of creating a national history or even a nationalist narrative. To link the memories of the famine to the international human rights discourse does not necessarily have to result in a more cosmopolitan or global view of history. In my view, Levy and Sznaider overlook the national misuse of the global memory of the Holocaust and the danger of relativizing the Shoah. In terms of creating

a national identity in Ukraine, references to the Holocaust are problematic because Ukrainian collaborators, mainly from Galicia, took an active part in hunting down and killing Jews during World War II. Johan Dietsch shows how history textbooks in present-day Ukrainian schools deal with this problem. In the textbooks on Ukrainian history, the Holocaust against the Jews is hardly mentioned, and the Holodomor is presented as a national tragedy. The main victims of Nazi rule seem to be the Ukrainians themselves. By contrast, the textbooks on world history inform the students about the Holocaust, but by doing so, they link the Jewish tragedy to European history and to an event that happened outside Ukraine in all German-occupied territories.[91] Neither in the chapters on the Holocaust nor in those on the Holodomor are Ukrainians portrayed as perpetrators. The textbooks fail to mention that many Ukrainians were involved in the grain requisitions during the famine of 1932–1933.[92] In this way the official historiography makes sense of the suffering of the Ukrainian nation. Against this background, it is not surprising that the politicians of the Yushchenko camp are able to link up with the international commemoration of the Holocaust and promote a nationalist history based on the Holodomor at the same time.

Former president Yushchenko was very active in promoting 10 million as the official number of deaths during the famine.[93] This figure is often used to argue that during the Holodomor even more people died than in the Holocaust and that the Ukrainian famine counts as one of the most enormous mass murders in human history. In contrast to Yushchenko, demographers in the Ukraine estimate the number of deaths by starvation and hunger-related diseases at 3.9 million. The French demographer Jacques Valin and his colleagues estimate the number of victims of the famine at 2.6 million.[94] This figure does not include the Ukrainians who died in the Kuban region outside the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. They also argue that it is not true that more Ukrainians died during the famine of 1932–1933 than under German occupation (1941–1945), as some Ukrainian nationalists claim. As we have seen in the Tibetan case, the link between the tally of victims and the definition of the nation is very important. In the narrative of the government-in-exile, all Tibetans, even outside the Tibet Autonomous Region, are included in the "imagined community." As a result, the number of deaths caused by the "Chinese occupation" as estimated by the Tibetan government-in-exile is much higher than it would be taking only the TAR into account. By taking the suffering of Ukrainians outside the independent nation-state into account, it is possible to define an ethnic community beyond the borders and present higher numbers of victims.

The experiences of famine have been important in the construction of nationalist narratives in the cases of Ukrainian and Tibetan exiles. In both cases, the nationalists have argued that the enemies starved "us" on purpose and that only independence would bring an end to hunger. Food habits alone do not provide meaning for the construction of national identities; so does hunger, and so does famine food, which is viewed as an embodied humiliation of the nation. In the post-Socialist Ukrainian nation-state, the memory of the famine has become a part of the new national myth and identity. The victimization of the Ukrainian nation can serve as a link between the peasant narratives of suffering and the genocide discourse of the post-Socialist intellectuals. Because an outside force, Stalin's Russia, is held responsible for the famine, the memories of this disastrous event serve to unify different cultural, ethnic, and political groups. In the narrative of the Tibetan exiles, famines

are presented as part of the genocide committed by the Chinese occupiers. Despite the fact that famine also results in the breakdown of social order and moral values, nationalist historiographies paint a black-and-white picture in which the "other" nation (England, Russia, China) is the perpetrator and one's own nation the innocent victim. In contrast to the narrative of the CCP, Tibetan authors describe the transformation of food habits under the Socialist regime in nationalist terms: the "rice eaters" exploiting the "*tsampa* eaters," the Chinese forcing the Tibetans to eat things that humiliated them as human beings. The Tibetan government-in-exile uses the famine to map the nation and support the claim that Tibet should include Kham and Amdo. For both sides, narratives of hunger contribute meaning, showing how the history of relations between the Han Chinese and the ethnic minorities is linked to the experience of hunger and famine.

It is true that the Ukrainian and Tibetan narratives do not focus on heroes and achievements. The memory of the famines can be described as what Jeffrey C. Alexander and Ron Eyerman call a cultural trauma. This means that a new identity is created based on negative and catastrophic events of the past.[95] For example, Eyerman points out that slavery was not a key memory for African Americans after it was abolished. One hundred years later, during the 1960s, the civil rights movement used the memory of slavery to create a new African American identity in which enslavement played a central role.[96] Eyewitnesses, who are the carriers of these memories, often have no access to the public space, so they need intellectuals, artists, filmmakers, or activists of a movement to help transmit the memories to society. Like the defeat by the Turks at Kosovo Field for the Serbs or the Holocaust for the Jews, this transmitted memory can become part of a cultural identity even for people who are not eyewitnesses or were not even alive at the time. In the case of Ukraine, even people from a region that became part of the Soviet Union only after World War II support the genocide interpretation in order to link themselves to the victimized nation. Eyerman's approach reminds us that collective memories are socially constructed according to a group's needs. As a result, every Ukrainian can share in the trauma of genocide, even if he or she has no relatives who survived or died in the famine.

The Ukrainian famine did reach the cities.[97] At the same time, the Soviet government stopped the moderate policy of "Ukrainization" and

launched a bloody purge of "Ukrainian nationalism." While peasants starved, a few months later Ukrainian party cadres, teachers, artists, and other intellectuals were purged.[98] Despite the fact that these groups had better access to food than the peasants, the suffering in the same period could be the foundation for a new historical narrative of pain. Only through a high level of moralization and politicization, plus support from the government after 1991, could the genocide narrative influence the identity of Ukrainian society. A catastrophe like the famine could not be replaced with positive events to create identity because there are too few such events in the modern history of Ukraine.[99] For example, the regime change in 1991 was not connected with a peaceful revolution from below. In contrast to Estonia, Georgia, or Lithuania, Ukraine did not have to fight for its independence. As a result, a national liberation struggle in 1990–1991 is absent from the process of creating a national myth.[100] Likewise, the violent resistance against the Soviet Union in the 1940s and 1950s is burdened with Ukraine's collaboration with Nazi Germany and anti-Semitism. Despite this fact, there are tendencies in Ukraine to glorify the members of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army as national heroes.

Modern Tibetan history too lacks positive events on which national myths could be built. The first reforms for modernization carried out by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama (1876–1933) met strong resistance from the clergy and finally failed. The uprisings of 1959, 1969, and 1989 against the Chinese authorities were crushed. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama gained much support for supporting a peaceful "middle way" on an international level, but he did not achieve any important concessions from the Chinese side. The official history that is written in the Tibetan exile community focuses on Tibetan victimization by Chinese communism. As a matter of fact, the provinces that were affected the worst by the famine were mainly populated with Han Chinese. Therefore, the story of the Great Leap famine is less suitable than the Ukrainian famine in terms of creating a nationalist narrative for independence.

Epilogue and Conclusion

Your dogs and swine eat the food of men, and you do not make any restrictive arrangements. There are people dying from famine on the roads, and you do not issue the stores of your granaries for them. When people die, you say, "It is not owing to me; it is owing to the year." In what does this differ from stabbing a man and killing him, and then saying—"It was not I; it was the weapon?" Let your Majesty cease to lay the blame on the year, and instantly from all the nation the people will come to you.

—Mencius

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Epilogue
Lessons Learned—How the Soviet Union and China Escaped Famine

WE SHOULD ASK NOT ONLY why and how Socialist systems produced new famines, but also how they were able to avoid famine in subsequent decades, for as it happened, no deadly famines occurred in the Soviet Union after 1948 or in China after 1962. After the long history of famines in China and the catastrophes of 1891, 1920–1922, 1931–1933, and 1947 in Russian and Soviet history, the disappearance of famines could hardly be taken for granted. This phenomenon really requires an explanation as to how the Communist parties reorganized relations with the peasantry and urban consumers. De Waal argues in the African context that governments would be well advised to establish an anti-famine contract, a kind of political consensus, with their populations in order to prevent recurrences of this type of catastrophe.[1] The scandal and politicization of famine create pressure on governments to help starving populations. Democratic societies are more likely to establish anti-famine contracts than non-democratic ones, but liberal rights are no guarantee that famine will be prevented if no such contract exists, as De Waal points out.[2] He also emphasizes the importance of governments' openly admitting the existence of famine. This epilogue will show how the Soviet Union and Maoist China prevented famine. First, it will explore whether the Communist parties established anti-famine contracts. It will then show that the state readjusted

relations with the peasantry. The Soviet Union became the largest grain importer in the world and built up a rural welfare system. In China, the government saw the prevention of urbanization and the introduction of birth planning as important tools for preventing famine. Last, Amartya Sen's thesis of the importance of democracy for the prevention of famine will be questioned.

STANDARDS FOR ANTI-FAMINE CONTRACTS

Did the Communist parties establish anti-famine contracts? Elizabeth Perry, quoting from an official white paper from recent years, has argued that the legitimacy of the rule of the CCP, even today, is based on the "right to subsistence" *(shengcun quanli)* that it provides to the people.[3] As a response to the challenge of the Western human rights discourse, the CCP emphasizes that the right to subsistence is more important for Chinese peasants than are political rights. However, not many references to the right to subsistence can be found in the *People's Daily* during the Mao era.[4] Ralph Thaxton has argued that the leadership of the CCP failed to establish an anti-famine contract because the local cadres who perpetrated the horrors of the Great Leap were still in charge in villages after 1962, and peasants could not trust them to negotiate a political contract against future famines. According to Thaxton, for a serious anti-famine contract, leaders at all levels would have to accept that they made errors, greater openness and transparency would have to be introduced, and regulatory power over food would have to be transferred into the hands of famine-vulnerable farmers.[5] Thaxton points out that the peasants in the villages in Henan Province, the location of his research, survived the peak of the famine not thanks to "administrative intervention" by reformers such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping, but thanks to their own survival stratagems such as stealing and "eating green." Thaxton believes that Socialist rule in China has suffered an enduring crisis of legitimacy ever since the Great Leap famine. As a matter of fact, neither the resale of grain to the countryside nor famine relief was a very important factor in bringing the disaster to an end because those measures were quite limited. The resale even declined in 1961 from the peak of the famine in 1960.[6]

Furthermore, the CPSU and the CCP long denied that serious famines had occurred in 1931–1933 and 1959–1961. In official textbooks,

written after the deaths of Stalin and Mao, the events were downplayed as "shortcomings" and "leftist mistakes" during collectivization or as "three years of natural disasters."[7] In both countries, no official anti-famine contract could be established as long as there was a taboo against addressing the real extent of the catastrophes. In the Soviet Union, no anti-famine contract existed during Stalin's lifetime because following the terrible famine of 1931–1933, another nationwide disaster occurred in 1947.

However, new policies in China after 1961 reduced the burden on the peasants and resulted in the recovery of the countryside in the following years. These policies were imposed from above and not below. Thaxton is right that only a few local cadres were punished for extreme violations and that many corrupt cadres still had power over the peasants. The central government took only formal responsibility for the failure of the Great Leap.[8] Needless to say, there was no ground for fair negotiation of an anti-famine contract between local cadres and peasants, but it is possible that Thaxton's standards for an anti-famine contract may be too advanced for a one party-state in general. In contrast to reportage during the Great Leap, cadres were under pressure to report more realistic production statistics after 1962, and extreme exaggerations such as the "sputnik fields," which resulted in extraordinarily high procurement rates during the high point of the Great Leap, never recurred, even during the Cultural Revolution. The peasants were not given more regulatory power over food, but with private plots a minimum standard for survival was guaranteed. Local communities had more control over production after 1961 because smaller production teams and not the communes were the accounting units. As long as they lived, neither Stalin nor Mao launched another Communist offensive in the countryside. "After meeting his Waterloo in the Great Leap Forward, Mao took care to temper his grandiose visions for socialist agriculture and stuck to a cautious approach to agriculture until the end of his life. . . . He would never again push for the transition to brigade or commune ownership. Instead of social mobilization, Mao turned to agricultural mechanization and other technical steps for improving agricultural output."[9] The status quo of a hybrid ownership structure in the countryside (collective, not state, ownership plus plots for private use for the peasants) was not officially challenged by the supreme leaders.[10] Stalin saw the full socialization of agriculture

on a national level as a precondition for a communism that would be achieved in the distant future.[11] However, in the Soviet Union and in China since the early 1960s fundamental policy changes toward the countryside were enforced. Both countries managed to prevent famine, and the increase in agricultural production alone cannot explain this achievement.

SOCIAL CONTRACT IN THE SOVIET UNION

After Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet government raised the state purchase prices for agricultural products, lowered the tax burden on the peasants, and even abolished the tax on private plots. The method of estimating the harvest was changed. The approach of counting the "biological yield" or the "harvest on the root" was abolished. The harvest standing in the fields at the moment of optimum ripeness was much higher than the threshed harvest. Based on the new system of measurement, the outcome was about 30 percent lower than previous official figures. This reform played an important role in improving the relationship between the state and the peasants.[12] The first years after Stalin's death saw an improvement of agricultural production starting from a low point. In 1954, grain production, at 85.6 million tons, was still lower than the last prewar harvest in the Russian Empire in 1913 (86 million tons). Between 1953 and 1958, the per capita production of grain and meat increased by 30 percent and milk by 40 percent.[13] In 1958, grain production increased to as much as 134.7 million tons.[14] Khrushchev pushed a very ambitious "virgin land program" in Kazakhstan and Siberia to solve the grain problem, hoping that the newly cultivated land would reduce the burden on the traditionally surplus regions such as Ukraine and south Russia. During the first years, the harvests on the "virgin lands" were impressive, but the output subsequently declined. Furthermore, the productivity of collective agriculture in general remained low. Khrushchev's agricultural policies reached a crisis stage as a result of bad harvests in 1960 and 1961. In June 1962, the Soviet government decided to raise the selling price of meat and dairy products by 30 percent in order to curb demand. In Novocherkassk, price riots broke out and workers went on strike. The government sent the military to quell the protest, and twenty workers were killed. These price riots are considered a crucial event in post-1953 Soviet history

because the government did not again dare to raise the sale prices of baked goods and dairy products for two decades.[15] At the same time, purchase prices were raised several times. This gap between purchase and sales prices became a huge burden for the state. Furthermore, the Soviet government purchased enormous amounts of grain and meat on the world market in the following decades to maintain social stability and peace among workers and urban consumers.

The "bloody Saturday" of Novocherkassk, to which Samuel Baron alludes in his book title, had already cost Khrushchev much sympathy, but in 1963 a bad grain harvest (107.5 million tons) caused urban and rural food shortages, contributing to the fall of Khrushchev in the following year. The potato and vegetable harvest was also poor, reaching only the 1955 levels. Zhores Medvedev argues that the amount of marketable grain in 1963 was greater than in 1955, but the urban population had also increased by 30 million people by then, so the harvest was still not adequate for the needs of the country.[16] Despite supply problems with high-quality food, however, the country was not threatened by serious famine. Medvedev evaluates the food supply in the Khrushchev era: "The fact that there were no signs of famine in any part of the country was certainly an achievement. Bread was cheap and easily available. But this was not enough for a modern industrial country."[17]

Despite the mixed results regarding agricultural production, the attitude of the state toward the peasants changed during the Khrushchev era. The improvement of rural living standards became an important goal of government policies. One reason for this change was rural-urban migration. While in China the CCP introduced birth planning to control the growth of the population in the aftermath of the famine, the Soviet Union faced a serious lack of rural labor after World War II. Between 1941 and 1945, around 26 million people died as a result of the war, and the great majority of the war deaths were peasants. Less than half of the demobilized soldiers who had been peasants before the war returned to the villages in 1945–1947.[18] In Ukraine it took until 1958 to recover from the losses of war, and in the Byelorussian SSR, until 1971. Due to ongoing urbanization, birthrates in the western parts of the Soviet Union in the 1950s had already reached the low levels of average urban societies. Between 1950 and 1971, the urban population increased from 69.4 million to 138.8 million.[19] Furthermore,

the population of Central Asia, a grain-consuming region, had much higher birthrates than the western regions.

Against the background of large-scale emigration from the villages, the Soviet leadership understood that the rural consumption and infrastructure had to be improved. "From the late 1950s, improving the Soviet population's standard of living became a central pillar of the leadership's attempt to forge a new social contract. An increase in the supply of foodstuffs to the Soviet population was viewed as a key element in raising living standards."[20] Khrushchev understood that the countryside could no longer be squeezed for resources. Agriculture would become more productive only if the rural sector was included in the social contract, and rural urbanization was a way to improve the living standards in the countryside. Khrushchev hoped that peasants would give up private plots if the state were able to provide modern housing, shops, theaters, and public facilities.[21] Furthermore, the leadership under Khrushchev abolished compulsory grain delivery and gave peasants the freedom to change jobs. A massive wage increase for collective farmworkers was also instituted.[22] From the early 1960s onward, the Soviet Union started to subsidize agriculture. After the fall of Khrushchev in 1964, the new government under Leonid Brezhnev hoped that huge investments in the rural economy would increase production, but the investments showed only limited results in terms of productivity.[23] The food supply grew more slowly than the urban population and between 1976 and 1986 even more slowly than the population in general.[24] However, the state did not ask consumers to tighten their belts. Rather, during the Brezhnev era, even more food was imported. Between 1960 and 1973, foreign grain purchases increased from 42.6 million to 99.2 million tons, and domestic food consumption rose by 400 percent.[25] Even if the imports were mainly used for the urban population and for livestock, they lowered the burden on the peasants of feeding others. The countryside was no longer a cow that the state could milk, but subsidies for agriculture, where productivity remained low, became a burden for the state budget. The state established social welfare and guaranteed wages for the rural population, and by the 1970s and 1980s, monthlong vacations, 112 days of paid maternity leave, and old-age pensions were impressive gains for rural dwellers. Despite the commonplace idea that the Brezhnev era was one of stagnation, social changes and economic growth took place in the

countryside from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s.[26] After 1976, the internal passport was finally introduced in rural areas. It made the rural populace more mobile and increased the pressure to improve the quality of rural life in order to prevent migration to the cities.[27] Under Brezhnev, the party made its peace with individual production on private plots, and decades after the collectivization of agriculture, more than half of the food consumed by the rural population was produced on private plots. In 1975, 59 percent of the potatoes, 34 percent of the vegetables, and 31 percent of the meat in the national output came from privately cultivated plots.[28] The acceptance of private plots by the state should be viewed as a major concession to the peasants.

To sum up, after Stalin's death Soviet agriculture made some progress, and the threat of famine disappeared. For many Soviet peasants and urban consumers who had experienced the famines of 1931–1933, 1941–1945, and 1947 firsthand, the conquest of hunger was quite an achievement. However, it must be said that the Soviet government could guarantee sustenance levels of nutrition only with large grain imports and high subsidies of sale prices. Medvedev makes a very interesting comparison between the food supply under Stalin and that in the late 1970s. In 1927–1929, Stalin used "extraordinary measures" to extract 15–16 million tons of grain from the peasants to feed the army and an urban population of 28.7 million. Between 1979 and 1985, the state could procure an average of 70 million tons of marketable grain per year. Such figures look like an impressive improvement, but while the grain procurement had increased by 450 percent since 1929, by 1986 the urban population had risen by 650 percent. Furthermore, more marketable grain was consumed by industries. These factors would explain why the Soviet Union had to import 30–50 million tons of grain annually. Medvedev argues: "Without these imports the average Soviet diet in the cities would be worse than it was in the 1920s."[29] Even in the early 1980s, the disappearance of hunger and scarcity could not be taken for guaranteed.

THE GRAIN PROBLEM AND BIRTH PLANNING IN CHINA

During the entire Mao era (1949–1976), the peasantry was "squeezed" for the development of industry via the unified purchase and sale of grain, a system that guaranteed low grain prices.[30] It should

be noted that grain production increased significantly from 169 million tons in 1954 to 286 million tons in 1976. However, the progress in production was foiled by the rapid expansion of the population. Between 1954 and 1976 the population increased from 600 million to over 930 million. As a result, average grain consumption in the countryside in the 1970s was almost the same as in the early 1950s. By the end of the Mao period, peasants were even consuming fewer refined grains such as rice and wheat and eating more unrefined carbohydrates than twenty years before.[31] The tumult during the early Cultural Revolution did not cause a serious famine. Factional struggles had an impact on agricultural production and storage, but grain administration was not dominated by the radical faction of the party. Premier Zhou Enlai decreed through regulations issued in 1966–1967 that the Red Guards and rebels would not be allowed to disturb industrial or agricultural production.[32] The Central Committee issued a decision prohibiting the mobilization of peasants for armed struggles *(wudou)*.[33] However, mass killings and massacres did occur in the countryside.[34] Under the slogan "grab the revolution, promote production" *(zhua geming, cu shengchan)* the party leadership was able to prevent an economic breakdown of the country, despite struggles among various political factions that had much in common with civil war. As a matter of fact, the Cultural Revolution was a relatively stable period in terms of agricultural production, and the procurement rate remained at an average level of 22 percent per year (see table E.1), the lowest since the introduction of unified purchasing and sales in 1953. The tax burden of the peasants too remained at a stable and moderate level compared to the 1950s and the Great Leap Forward.[35] That was a victory for the people in the countryside, but it caused problems for the state in feeding the urban population.

I argue that the serious implementation of birth planning *(jihua shengyu)*, beginning in 1963, was related to the experience of famine and the grain problem.[36] Already in the mid-1950s, the party leadership had debated the necessity of population control and planning. Chinese leaders and even Mao assumed that an uncontrolled increase of the population would make it difficult to feed so many mouths in the future.[37] However, as a result of the ambitious industrialization effort of the Great Leap, manpower was needed for the huge construction and hydraulic projects. Finally, the debate was silenced by Mao in 1958.[38]

Table E.1. Grain Production and Purchases in China, 1966–1979

Year	Production (tons)	Purchase (total tons)	Purchase (net tons)	Percent of Production (total)	Percent of Production (net)
1966	214,000,000	51,580,000	38,240,000	24.1	17.9
1967	217,800,000	49,355,000	37,740,000	22.7	17.3
1968	209,050,000	48,695,000	37,865,000	23.3	18.1
1969	210,950,000	46,675,000	33,825,000	22.1	16.0
1970	239,950,000	54,435,000	42,020,000	22.7	17.5
1971	250,150,000	53,020,000	39,820,000	21.2	15.9
1972	240,500,000	48,295,000	33,920,000	20.1	14.1
1973	264,950,000	56,120,000	41,005,000	21.2	15.5
1974	275,250,000	58,070,000	43,975,000	21.1	16.0
1975	284,500,000	60,860,000	43,945,000	21.4	15.4
1976	286,300,000	58,250,000	40,720,000	20.3	14.2
1977	282,750,000	56,615,000	37,560,000	20.0	13.3
1978	304,750,000	61,740,000	42,710,000	20.3	14.0
1979	332,100,000	71,985,000	51,700,000	21.7	15.6

Source: Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu jihuasi, ed., *Zhongguo nongcun jingji tongji daquan 1949–1986* [A Complete Collection of Statistics Regarding the Rural Economy of China] (Beijing: Nongye chubanshe, 1989), 410–411.

The following famine crushed all hopes that agricultural production could be increased in a great leap and that the grain problem could be solved in the near future.

Despite the death of millions during the famine, the Chinese population overall decreased only temporarily. In 1963 and 1964, China experienced a baby boom following economic recovery. The population reached 704 million in 1964, compared to 659 million in 1958. During that time, the Chinese government began to implement birth planning. In 1964, the State Council established a Birth Planning Commission. Interestingly, the implementation of birth planning started in the cities in 1963 and not in the countryside. The cities would start and then provide the impetus for selected areas in the countryside. State leaders such as Zhou Enlai believed that the new policy would be easier to implement in urban areas because women there were better educated and the public health system was more developed.[39] Tianjin served as a model for the policy of free sterilization and abortions. That birth planning in the cities would reduce the burden of the peasants served as

an important argument.[40] For example, a document of the Urban Work Conference pointed out that birth planning would "control the growth of the urban population; reduce the burden of the peasants; [and] relax the tight situation in the supplies for daily living, as well as housing, schooling, and in other facilities of the municipal administration."[41] In July 1963, Zhou Enlai gave a speech to argue that a Socialist theory of population was needed. His first argument in favor of birth planning was that the uncontrolled increase of the urban population between 1957 and 1960 had resulted in a high burden for the state.[42] In the following year, birth planning was extended to rural areas with dense populations. The famine is never mentioned in published documents on birth planning, but references to the grain problem are made.[43]

Starting in 1964, the birthrate and the natural population increase began to slow down. For the first time after 1949, these two rates were lower in the cities than in the countryside.[44] The first chaotic years of the Cultural Revolution disturbed the new policies, but birth planning was intensified again in the early 1970s. As a matter of fact, the "soft" birth controls in the Mao era (promotion of late marriage and late births, sterilization, and contraception) achieved only a slowdown in population development. In total, the Chinese population still increased, from 691 million in 1964 to 962 million in 1978.[45] One reason was that the policy of birth control was more successful in the cities than in the countryside. Between 1964 and 1976, the number of children per urban woman fell from 4.3 to 1.6. In the countryside, the rate decreased from 6.5 to 3.5 in the same period.[46]

PREVENTION OF URBANIZATION

As a lesson from the famine, the CCP strictly enforced the household registration system between 1962 and the early 1980s to prevent uncontrolled urbanization. The leadership believed that the rapid increase of consumers in the urban rationing system had contributed to the heavy burden on the peasants and to the famine during the Great Leap. The urbanization of China stopped for almost two decades. Between 1962 and 1978, the year of the beginning of the reform and opening policy, the rate of urbanization increased only from 17.3 percent to 17.92 percent. The government archived the slowdown of urbanization with a combination of policies such as the strict enforcement of the

household registration system, restrictions on the recruitment of workers from the countryside, birth planning, and a campaign to "send educated urban youth down to the villages, up to the mountains" *(zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang yundong)*. However, due to the growth of population in general, the number of people living in cities rose from 116 million to 172 million during that time.[47]

After the "sending down" of 20 million people in 1962 and 1963, the government intensified the "sending down" campaign during the Cultural Revolution. Scholars are still debating whether this campaign was driven mainly by ideological or economic motives to reduce the burden on the state to provide higher education, jobs, housing, and food rations.[48] According to the propaganda, the urban youth would help to develop the countryside and remote border areas, and at the same time they would receive revolutionary education from the poor and lower-middle peasants. During the radical heyday, the campaign was praised as a way to reduce the "three differences" (between city and countryside, peasants and workers, and manual and intellectual labor). The "sending down" of the youth was also an effective way to demobilize the radical organizations of Red Guards and rebels that had gotten out of hand in 1966–1967. In the context of this book, I will focus on the impact of the "sending down" campaign on the grain system.

Many urban young people who were "sent down" had never seen the poverty of the villages before, and they lost their faith in the revolution, wishing then to return to the cities and escape a life of hardship. However, the strict enforcement of the household registration system made it almost impossible to leave the countryside without permission. Of the 16 million educated youth "sent down" during the Cultural Revolution, 8 million were able to leave the villages to study, join the army, or take urban jobs, while others could return only after the death of Mao.[49] It is interesting that the three most important cities—Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai—also sent the highest numbers of urban youth to the countryside.[50] While during the famine these three cities and their swelling populations had been fed at the expense of the countryside, millions of urban youth lost their "iron rice bowls." The CCP did not publicly acknowledge at that time that the sending down of 16 million people was related to the difficulties in feeding the urban population. However, problems in finding employment for all middle or high school graduates in the cities were mentioned.[51] In the 1950s, the state

hoped that the urban youth in the countryside could produce their food themselves by joining in the work of agricultural production.[52] In reality, most urban youth were not familiar with agricultural work, and at the same time they needed housing and land. The government had to provide subsidies for their settlement *(anzhifei)* that included housing, health care, transportation, learning materials, and agricultural tools. Between 1967 and 1972 the central government spent 1.7–1.8 billion yuan on these programs, but the subsidies were too low to solve the difficulties of everyday life.[53] The income of the educated youth in the villages was often much lower than that of the local population because peasants could earn extra income through economic sidelines and because they had better private plots. Many urban parents had to support their children in the countryside and sent money on a regular basis. In the grain deficit areas, cadres tried to lower the grain rations of the educated youth as much as possible.[54] Most peasants still considered the educated youth a burden for their production teams.

After increasing conflicts in the villages and protests by the young people themselves, the central government and a national conference on the educated youth decided in 1973 to raise the monetary subsidies. Furthermore, if the grain rations of educated youth were lower than the average for unmarried people or if the grain rations of a work team were extraordinarily low, the youth would receive an additional ration from the state's sale of grain. According to *The History of the Educated Youth in China*, the attitude of the peasants toward the outsiders improved after this decision because higher subsidies from the government reduced the burden on the villagers.[55] Instead of living and working with the peasants on the same production teams, the educated youth were organized into their own teams. Furthermore, the government instructed the villages to distribute private plots of the same quality to the urban youth as to the local population.[56] As we have seen, the state had to spend money for the "sending down" program and used grain partly from the state's sales for the additional rations. However, between 1962 and 1979 over 17.76 million urban youth were sent to the countryside. Therefore, the government did not have to supply them with the full urban grain rations of between 508 and 900 grams per day. No wonder the official *Grain Work in Modern China* acknowledges that the "sending down" policy helped to slow the growth of the urban population, as well as stabilize the grain supply system and the

income and expenditures of the state.[57] For example, the amount of grain distributed in Shanghai and its suburbs remained relatively stable during the Cultural Revolution, while the population decreased as a result of the "sending down" campaign.[58] In sum, the campaign saved grain for the state. However, the savings were not as high as anticipated because more peasants were recruited from the countryside to work in factories than planned.

While the CCP enforced an anti-urbanization policy during the Cultural Revolution, it would be wrong to assume that no rural-urban migration took place. The workforce in state-owned and collective enterprises in the cities and towns increased by 27 million people, of whom 14 million were recruited in the countryside, causing a heavy burden on the system of grain supply.[59] Despite the general increase of grain production during the Cultural Revolution, China faced supply crises and shortages in 1971 and 1977, when production fell. In 1971, Zhou Enlai, who was in charge of the grain supply, warned that the number of workers had increased and therefore the sales of grain and the state payroll had increased as well. In 1971 and 1972, the number of workers increased by 9.8 million, at least 5 million more than planned.[60] In order to feed this population, the grain stocks were reduced. In November 1972, the State Council issued a "Report Regarding the Grain Problem," which called for limiting the growth of the urban population and the number of workers. As a result, the increase in the population that was entitled to grain rations in cities and small towns slowed down to 2 million per year between 1973 and 1976, compared to an average of 4–5 million in 1971 and 1972.[61] During the supply crisis in 1977, the government acted similarly, emphasizing that rural-urban migration had to be strictly controlled and the so-called "black population" (meaning illegal residents) in the cities had to be sent back to the countryside.[62] In the following years, the educated youth who wanted to return to the cities created enormous pressure for the urban supply system.

IN SEARCH OF A BALANCE

In contrast to its actions during the Great Leap Forward, in the 1960s the government tried hard to balance the instabilities among the provinces and the internal transfers of grain. Many provinces in North China relied on grain transfers from the south. Between 1971

and 1976, previously grain-surplus provinces such as Sichuan, Inner Mongolia, Guizhou, and Xinjiang, which had earlier been important for the supply of disaster regions and the cities, turned into non-surplus provinces. Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai became reliant on the import of soybeans from abroad to balance the shortages. In 1975, the party secretary of Sichuan, Li Jingquan, who had been willing to sacrifice millions of peasants in Sichuan for the grain supply of the country during the Great Leap, wrote a letter to the State Council. He warned that as a result of the decreasing production and rural rations in Sichuan, the mistakes of 1959 could be repeated if the government paid no attention to the problem. In response, the central government reduced purchases in Sichuan and transferred 0.5 million tons of grain to the province in the following year.[63] Despite all the rhetoric about self-reliance, the government continued to import grain. From 1967 to 1976, China's net imports averaged 2.11 million tons per year, in contrast to 4.18 million tons per year in the post-famine period of 1961–1966 or 10.45 million tons per year from 1977 to 1984.[64] The system from the 1950s of financing industrial imports with agricultural exports had collapsed during the famine. It was not possible to extract enough grain from the countryside any more.

Against the background of a Soviet war threat, the leadership of the CCP introduced new policies regarding grain storage. Mao launched the campaign "Prepare for war, prepare for famine, for the people." Local authorities and peasants were encouraged to establish local granaries and even store food in their homes. The defense strategy of a decentralized people's war made it necessary to built up more local resources, and the dependence of North China on grain transfers from the south was considered a serious problem.[65] Although references to the Great Leap were not made, the People's Communes were much better prepared for famine than in 1959. The new constitution of 1975 mentioned "Prepare for war, prepare for famine, for the people" and also allowed peasants to have garden plots and cattle for private use under the guidance of the Socialist economy (Article 7).[66]

Post-reform sources claim that the performance of the agricultural sector would have been much better without the campaigns of the Cultural Revolution. This might be true. However, more grain was produced on average per year during the Cultural Revolution than in the early 1950s or during the years of readjustment (1962–1965), which

are often presented as the "golden years" in the official historiography. Population statistics for the Cultural Revolution show no evidence of excess mortality, which is a marker for deadly famine.[67] However, the food that was produced was far from enough to satisfy the demands of consumers. One clear sign of supply problems was the continuous campaigns to educate the population in order to save grain. On several occasions Mao and other leaders called for the population to save grain by eating more vegetables, beans, potatoes, gruel, and carrots instead.[68] In 1972, the country was hit by serious natural disasters, and grain production decreased by 9.65 million tons compared to the previous year (see table E.1). In order to curb consumption and guarantee rations to peasants in the disaster areas, in June 1973 the Grain Office of the Trade Ministry defined a bottom line for minimum rations for all provinces. In many provinces, the bottom-line ration was set below 500 grams per day. For example, for Shaanxi and Shanxi Provinces it was set at 356 grams per day, while in Henan the highest rations were set at 575 grams.[69] It can be assumed that peasants who received rations below 400 grams suffered from hunger. In contrast to two years of rapid decline in grain production during the Great Leap (1959–1960), the harvest of 1973 was the best since the founding of the PRC, and in the following two years grain production also improved.

Deadly famines disappeared, but hunger and malnutrition were a part of everyday life in many regions of China during the Mao era. In 1979, a document of the Central Committee of the CCP admitted that in 1977 "more than 100 million people in the rural areas suffered a lack of grain."[70] Only very little research has been done on hunger in the 1970s.[71] Two reports written by journalists of the New China news agency tell moving stories about hunger in the countryside in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[72] However, the reasons for hunger and poverty in the late 1970s were quite different from those at the time of the Great Leap Forward. The first report, about the yellow earth plateau in North China, emphasized environmental problems that were also related to irresponsible policies.[73] In the second, written by Chen Dabin, peasants have no interest in increasing production, discouraged by the counterproductive policies of local leftist cadres backed by the "Gang of Four." These stories often end with the notion that the poor production teams live on relief, grain loans, and grain resales from the state.[74] These peasants were not exploited by the state as they had been

during the Great Leap, but they lived in poverty due to low production. Ash has pointed out that grain resales to needy peasants played an important role in the Chinese system.[75] It is estimated that by the end of the 1970s about 20 percent of the production teams were non-viable and a burden to the state. The system was basically relying on the top 20 percent of the teams for the market grain surplus.[76]

In 1978 for the first time China could meet the minimum level of basic nutrition of over 2,400 calories a day per person, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO).[77] Despite the improvements in agricultural production in the early years of reform, supply problems were far from solved. During that time, the new leadership under Deng Xiaoping decided to impose "hard" birth planning with the "one-child policy," which was based on strict enforcement and draconian limits. The party leadership believed that the new ambitious economic goals could be reached only if birth planning slowed down population growth.[78] In an open letter to all members of the CCP and the Communist Youth League in September 1980, the central government also used the grain problem as an argument to explain the necessity that one couple should bear one child only. Rapid population growth since the establishment of the PRC had made it more and more difficult to provide food, clothing, housing, transportation, education, health care, and jobs for all. Grain consumption per capita on average, including industrial and other uses, would be at least 800 *jin* per year. "If 100 million more children were born, we would have to produce 800 billon *jin* [4 million tons] of grain. Currently, the arable land of our country is only 2 *mu* per head on average. If the population increased by 300 million, the arable land per head would be reduced to a little more than 1 *mu*. Under current circumstances and with a reduction of land, it would be quite difficult to produce 800 *jin* of grain per head, on average, and enough cash crops."[79] In the early 1980s, arguments such as this were often made.[80] Due to the economic upswing and the rapid increase in agricultural production, the argument that population growth would endanger a sufficient grain supply became less compelling. Furthermore, meat and vegetables became an important part of the diet. At least the late Maoist and early post-reform leadership considered birth planning an important tool in solving the grain problem and preventing famine.

DEMOCRACY AND FAMINE

Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen have argued that democracy and a free press were key elements for the prevention of famine. In *Hunger and Public Action* the authors compare the Indian and Chinese cases. Drèze and Sen argue that no major famine took place after the independence of India in 1947. They observe that India's democratic system and the free media put pressure on the government to react immediately when there was a threat of famine. Such was the advantage of the Indian system, even though India lagged behind Maoist and post-reform China in economic growth, rural education, and health care. The authors see the explanation for the Great Leap famine in the absence of democracy and a free press in China, where misinformation and a misreading of the crisis by the government led to a sharp increase in food procurement from rural areas.[81] "The absence of an adversarial system of politics and journalism also meant that there was little political pressure on the government from any opposition group and from informed public opinion to take adequate anti-famine measures rapidly."[82] In *Development as Freedom* Sen even argues that Mao acknowledged in his speech at the Seven Thousand Cadres Conference in 1962 that the famine was caused "by the lack of the informational links that a more democratic system can provide in averting disasters of the kind that China experienced."[83] Mao did indeed argue that the party should restore the principle of democratic centralism in order to improve relations with the masses and also to improve the flow of information. However, he made no direct reference to the famine in his speech.[84] It was not he but President Liu Shaoqi who drew lessons from the disasters. An improvement of the information flow within the system played a role in the reforms that brought an end to the famine, but it was by no means the major policy.

Democratic systems can prevent deadly famines, as Sen and Drèze have argued, but they provide much less protection against endemic malnutrition. How can we explain the success of the CCP in preventing deadly famine between 1949 and 1958 and also from 1962 to the present day even though the country is ruled by one party? If a free press is the key, why is it that no deadly famines broke out after the "years of shame"? Such questions cannot be answered within the binary

opposition of democracy/dictatorship. In later writings, Drèze and Sen introduce the further factor of political commitment. "Because of its radical commitment to the elimination of poverty and to improving living conditions—a commitment in which Maoist as well as Marxist ideas and ideals played an important part—China did achieve many things that the Indian leadership failed to press for and pursue with any vigour. The elimination of widespread hunger, illiteracy and ill health falls solidly in this category. When state action operates in the right direction, the results can be quite remarkable, as is illustrated by the social achievement of the pre-reform period."[85] Given the importance of political commitment and the strength of the Marxist and Maoist ideals regarding the eradication of poverty, the question of how famines could occur in the Soviet Union and China seems all the more compelling. A strong state can attain remarkable goals, but it can also produce catastrophes. While several scholars have argued that democracy and a free press can be helpful in avoiding deadly famines, we find that famine was also successfully prevented in non-democratic societies such as Indonesia under Suharto and the Soviet Union in the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras.[86] Drèze and Sen's focus on democracy does not take into account other ideologies and institutions that may shape useful responses to famine, such as Confucianism and the state relief system of the Chinese empire.[87] I argue that the Socialist governments in the Soviet Union and China had the will to prevent famine after 1947 and 1961. They might have felt that a return of famine would be a serious challenge to the legitimacy of socialism and party rule in the long run. Furthermore, party leaders did not want to challenge the status quo with the peasants. Drèze and Sen are right that an increase in food production alone cannot explain the end of famine, and we have to take entitlements into account. In the Soviet Union, the entitlements of the urban population were expanded to the countryside. The CPSU and the CCP were also willing to import grain in order to avoid further conflicts with the peasantry. As we know, the statistical systems of planned economies have always had problems with reliability, but a breakdown of the flow of information about the food consumption of peasants such as occurred during the famines did not take place again. Therefore, while it might be true that democracy and a free press provide better conditions for preventing famine, the cases of the Soviet Union and China show that these are not necessary conditions. Furthermore,

the later successes of the Socialist regimes show that the argument that famine occurred due to a lack of democracy is much too simple.

Even if we concede that no anti-famine contract in the sense meant by De Waal or Thaxton was established in the Soviet Union and China, it is incontrovertible that the Communist parties learned important lessons from the famines and successfully prevented similar disasters in the later decades of Socialist rule. The Soviet state had to pay a high price for the sharp rise in nutritional standards since the 1960s. The Soviet Union became the largest grain importer in the world, and the subsidies for agriculture and the rural welfare state became a vast burden on the government. A state-financed welfare and pension system like that in the Soviet Union, which includes the entire rural population, has not so far been established in the Chinese countryside. China did not have the resources to subsidize agriculture as did the Soviet Union under Brezhnev. Despite more moderate rates of procurement and taxation compared to the 1950s, the CCP emphasized the principle of self-reliance *(zili gengsheng)*. During the chaotic years of the early Cultural Revolution, agricultural production and the food supply system did not collapse. However, the people had to pay a high price in the sense that the "dual society" was preserved. With the fear of famine, rural-urban and social mobility was limited. Urbanization stopped for two decades because the leadership feared that 80 percent of the population, the peasants, would be unable to feed more than 20 percent, the urban citizens. In addition, I have argued that an important reason for the introduction of birth planning in the cities in 1963 was to reduce the burden on the peasants. Until the mid-1980s, worries that China would be unable to feed an uncontrolled growing population served as an argument for birth planning. Only after the reform in 1978 was China able to overcome the period of scarcity. In the Khrushchev era, the unpopular system of compulsory grain delivery was abolished, but in China a similar system of unified purchasing lasted as late as the mid-1980s. This difference again shows that resources in China were much more limited and that the leadership did not believe, in a period of over thirty years, that the market was capable of solving the food problems of the country. Sen's emphasis on democracy appears of limited relevance to the Soviet and Chinese cases. One-party dictatorships can also prevent famine if the political leadership has the will to do so.

Conclusion
Hunger and Socialism

WHEN THE COMMUNIST PARTIES came into power in Russia and China, they inherited an enormous burden. China was a "land of famine," where millions had starved to death under late Qing and Republican rule, and in the early 1950s, it was one of the poorest countries in the world.[1] In late imperial Russia, although agriculture was more developed than in China and the level of rural nutrition was much higher, nevertheless half a million people died in the famine of 1891. Food supply problems during World War I contributed to the fall of the tsarist regime and the government of the February Revolution, as well as to the breakdown of the Russian Army. The Chinese and Soviet governments launched ambitious industrial programs to escape the backward conditions of their countries, but the first decades of the new regimes produced more serious famines than any that had occurred under the old regimes. In the early 1950s the rural population in the poor provinces of North China lived on calorie intakes that would be considered famine levels today. Under the Socialist planned economy the sale and distribution of grain was centralized under the guidance of the state so that serious mistakes in planning in poor countries such as Russia and China could result not only in supply crises involving toothpaste and meat, but also in deadly famines.

Too often Western scholarship has reduced the Great Leaps to questions of factionalist struggles at the elite level or to conflicts between the party and the peasants on the village level. Scholars who do not take the chronic poverty and history of hunger in these countries into account tend to reduce the reasons for the outbreak of famine under socialism to cruel or misguided decisions by Stalin and Mao. Meanwhile, scholars such as Jasper Becker, Ralph Thaxton, and Gao Wangling have done important research on conflicts involving peasants and cadres during the famine.[2] In their arguments, however, the necessity of feeding a rapidly increasing urban population and peasants in the disaster areas plays no role. The rural population and the state were not the only actors, however. I argue that in order to understand the famines we have to include the historical conditions and all the groups in the food supply system, such as the urban population, the army, and the peasants in the disaster areas.

GREAT LEAP FAMINES

As a reaction to the crises of more moderate agricultural policies that resulted in urban supply problems, Stalin in 1929 and Mao Zedong in 1958 launched great leaps forward that were aimed at catapulting their countries into modernity within a short time. Given the background of poverty and underdevelopment, the strategy of great leaps was fraught with risk. In this book, I have argued that the Soviet famine of 1931–1933 and the Chinese famine of 1959–1961 share many similarities because both were connected with radical programs for collectivization and a fundamental transformation of society. The rapid increase in the urban population created enormous pressure to take more grain from the countryside to feed the cities. Neither country established a relief system in the early years of rule that could deal with a famine affecting millions of people. In contrast to many other famines, such as that in Russia in 1921–1922, the governments were able to prevent the outbreak of nationwide epidemics so that most of the casualties were from hunger and not from disease.[3] The similarity of the timing is also striking, for both catastrophes broke out after ten years of peaceful economic construction and one to two years after a radical collectivization was implemented. These are important differences from the Soviet

famines of 1919–1921 and 1947, which occurred within the context of war devastation.

With their strong belief in rational planning and modern technology, the Communist governments underestimated the impact of frequent natural disasters and possible declines in agricultural production. Agriculture, after all, cannot be planned in the same way one plans the operation of a tractor factory. In both countries, the architects of early five-year plans, which were focused on the development of heavy industry, considered consumption only in terms of expense. The Communist parties made it clear that a distribution of wealth and resources alone could not solve the problems of the country but that huge sacrifices had to be made to build up a modern industrial nation. For the Soviet and Chinese leaders it was clear that the peasants had to pay a "tribute" and were the major source of "Socialist primitive accumulation." In the "dual society" of the Mao era, the large majority of the urban population was organized in work units and was entitled to welfare, pensions, and food rations from the state, while the rural collectives relied on their own production outcomes and could expect help from the center only in cases of serious natural disaster.

One important aspect of the relations between the Socialist state and the peasants was the ratio of urban to rural food supply. On the one hand, all grain that would be eaten by urban workers would have to be taken out of the countryside and would have an impact on relations with the peasants, especially if high grain procurement rates did leave not enough for the rural population to eat full meals. On the other hand, if peasants increased consumption directly, it would be difficult to nourish the urban population. Beginning in the early 1950s, the Chinese government used the needs of the workers and peasants in the disaster areas to encourage the peasants in the surplus areas to consume less. At the same time, the government used the necessary harmony with the peasantry as an argument to urge the urban population to save food. The Communist Party hoped that people would internalize the attitude that waste was an "unpatriotic" sin. During the Great Leap and its rapid urbanization, the fragile balance between agrarian production and both rural and urban consumption broke down.

While in the Soviet Union grain was rationed only during supply crises and war, the PRC maintained a rationing system between 1953 and

the mid-1980s. It was not easy to limit the consumption of the peasants because the rural population never received ration cards from the state. Rural rations were the results of production outcomes and the amount that was left after the state had taken its share. The new Chinese regime promised in 1949 that nobody would starve to death again.[4] However, at the same time, the central government made it clear that it would send relief only in the case of very serious natural disasters affecting several provinces and that all natural disasters involving smaller areas should be solved with local resources. The central government made a great promise to the Chinese people, but it did not have the resources to guarantee food security to all disaster victims. As a matter of fact, the slogan "nobody shall starve to death" disappeared from the press in the mid-1950s, and when the nationwide famine broke out in 1959, the government had to decide which groups and areas would be saved and who would have to starve.

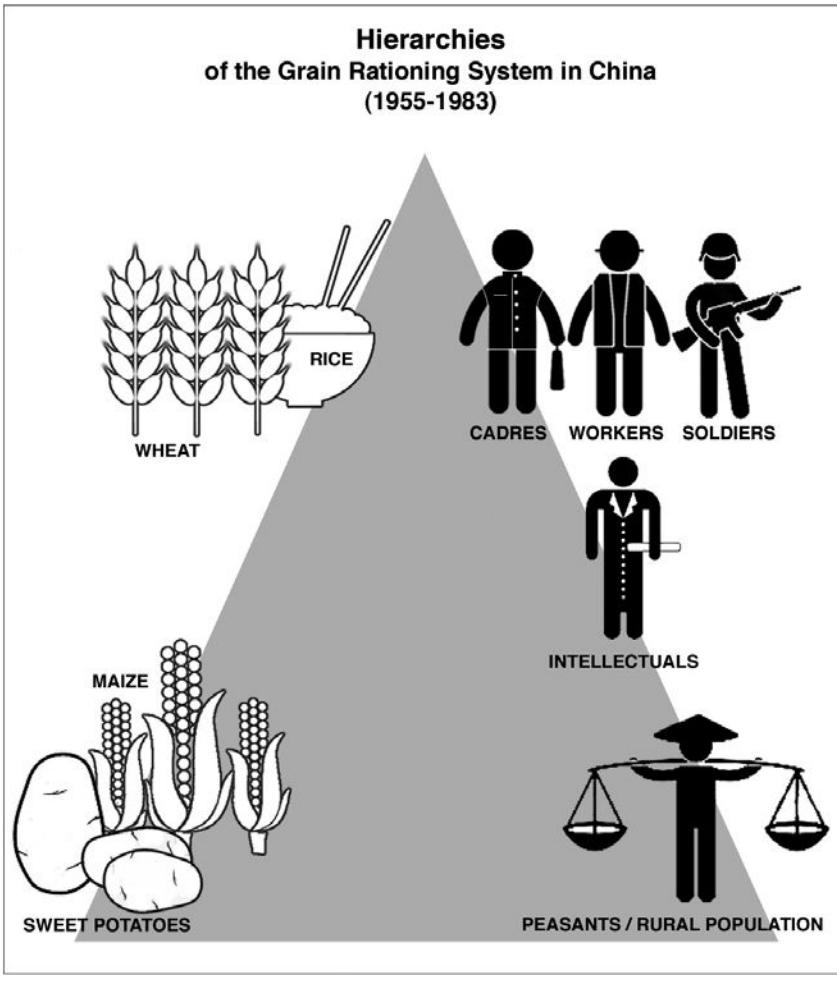
HIERARCHIES OF HUNGER: PREVENTING URBAN FAMINE

I have argued that the famines should be understood as deadly escalations of the general conflict between the state and the peasantry over agricultural surpluses. In this conflict, both sides tried to manipulate statistics before the catastrophe took place. The peasants and local cadres underreported production and sometimes exaggerated the damage caused by natural disasters in order to obtain relief, while the state used statistics that exaggerated outputs, with the result that the procurement rates were also raised. In the Soviet Union by the end of the 1920s and in China by 1957, the political leaders had become highly skeptical regarding reports about hunger from the countryside. Stalin and Mao more than once expressed the belief that peasants were feigning hunger in order to sabotage grain procurement, and the government had to guess how hungry the peasants really were, a development I have called the politicization of hunger. Indeed, China faced several supply crises—in 1953, 1954, and 1957—that did not turn into deadly famine on a national level. It is thus comprehensible that when the famine really took place in early 1959, Mao Zedong and his colleagues needed time to realize that the whole nation was threatened by it and that the peasants were no longer feigning hunger.

Defining how much was enough to eat was in itself a recipe for conflict. Hierarchies of rationing to the disadvantage of the rural population had already been established long before the famine when in 1955 a unified rationing system was set up for the urban population.[5] While a worker in the wheat-producing areas who performed heavy labor was entitled to between 750 and 900 grams of grain a day, the standards for the peasants were never clearly defined. State leaders such as Chen Yun recommended 500 grams of processed grain (about 1,700–1,830 calories) per person as a reasonable daily ration for peasants, but such recommendations did not mean that the rural population had any entitlements.[6] Geographically, zones of entitlement and non-entitlement were created as well. The central government was in charge of the grain supply of the cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Liaoning. As early as the winter of 1958, Li Xiannian said that if starvation to death occurred in the provinces, each provincial government would be responsible.[7] Many decisions of the central government during the following famine reflected these priorities. For example, the central government decided to curb rural consumption at a very low level, and in 1959 and the first half of 1960, the CCP launched campaigns urging people to eat subsidiary foods. Urban rations were cut only moderately. Grain was taken from the so-called "surplus" provinces instead of the government's ending the policies of the Great Leap. In the Soviet Union, the government ranked cities with the letters A, B, and C. Only the important "A" cities, such as Leningrad or Moscow, received food from the supply system of the central government, while the "B" cities had to rely in addition on local grain collections and "C" cities received no grain from the central supplies.[8]

Facing a serious decline in agricultural production and food availability, the governments had to set priorities as to who should eat first. I have shown that the Chinese government did not completely ignore the rural famine but took action. In the first half of 1960, the state apparatus was mobilized to prevent the rural famine from turning into an urban one. The state tried to get even more grain out of the starving countryside until urban grain stocks stood almost empty. Only then was the central government willing to introduce new policies and import grain.

When we look at the policies, it seems that the Soviet and Chinese Communists had a priority list that would have been as follows:



1. The party apparatus and workers in heavy and defense industries.
2. The army. In both countries soldiers were protected and received better-than-starvation rations.
3. Important cities such as Moscow and Leningrad in the Soviet Union, and Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and the Liaoning region in China.
4. Exports. They continued in order to fulfill contracts with foreign countries and to exchange grain for industrial technology.
5. In the Soviet countryside, workers in the Machinery and Tractor Stations and in some local industries received ration cards. In

China, certain temporary workers in construction and irrigation projects and workers on state farms *(guoying nongchang)* were entitled to food rations.
6. The ordinary peasant population.
7. Prisoners in the labor camps.[9]

Apart from the labor camps, the peasants were the least important sector of the population. The groups at the higher end of the hierarchy would also receive wheat and rice, which were considered high-quality grain, while peasants in the poorer provinces would rely on sweet potatoes. In the villages during the Great Leap, peasants with connections to party cadres or cooks in the public dining halls stood a better chance of survival than others. In China and the Soviet Union traditional non-surplus areas were sometimes better off because the state did not enforce harsh procurements as it was well known that in these regions nothing was to be had. Some people find it counter-intuitive that Ukraine, as the historical bread basket of the Russian Empire, was so hard hit by the famine of 1931–1933. However, I would say that it made perfect sense according to the government's logic of getting more grain out of the surplus areas in order to prevent an urban famine.

Amartya Sen has argued that in some famines people died not because food was unavailable but because of a loss of entitlements.[10] The "entitlements approach" focuses less on the development of agricultural production than on distribution. It is also a critique of the neo-Malthusian paradigm that explains famine with the growth of population. Based on Sen's argument, it can be said that Soviet and Chinese peasants starved to death because they were not entitled to ration cards and that the state distributed food to the great disadvantage of the rural population. However, both countries experienced a sudden 30 percent decline in food availability.[11] The growth of the population and of the cities were important factors. Between 1931 and 1932 the number of eaters in the urban rationing system of the Soviet Union increased by almost 8 million. The urban population in China increased by over 19.5 million between 1958 and 1960.[12] In both cases, the state realized too late that the supply system was unable to feed such numbers of people at the expense of the peasants. It goes without saying that the governments lacked the resources to include the whole population in the rationing system. In my view, the downsizing of the overambitious plans of the Great Leap was a more realistic option than the expansion of the rationing system.

Furthermore, the grain exports created inordinate pressure on the supply system. If the governments had stopped the exports, millions of lives could have been saved. In a thought experiment, I made an estimate for the Soviet case: based on a 600-gram ration of grain per person per day, 8.2 million people could have been fed for a year with the 1932–1933 grain exports alone. This figure is more than the number of casualties of the famine. In the Chinese case, the exports of 1960 would have been enough to feed 5.4 million people for a year, based on a ration of 500 grams of grain. This figure is much lower than the number of those who died of hunger in 1960. However, if the government had stopped the exports as early as 1959, another 25.9 million could have been saved. These estimates are only thought experiments because they assume that the governments had perfect information about where relief was needed and that grain was contributed without loss, theft, or waste, assumptions that were not the case in reality. However, the estimates show that the exports are an important factor in understanding the famine.

It is astonishing that the Chinese Communists acted the same way as did their Soviet counterparts when they sacrificed millions of peasants' lives on the altar of urban stability and industrialization. While Bolshevism was an urban phenomenon, the Chinese Communists had stronger roots in the countryside because they had built up rural bases before they took over power in the whole country. However, when the crisis occurred, the government believed that urban stability was the key to securing the survival of the regime. The protection of the cities might be one important factor in the Communist Party's ability to survive the famine. Workers and soldiers did not turn against the Bolsheviks as during the uprising in Kronstadt in 1921. Furthermore, separatist movements in the periphery could not count on the breakdown of order or even support from uprisings in the center.

In terms of the proclaimed goals, it seems that Stalin was more successful than Mao. Throughout his lifetime, the grain procurement system was able to provide resources for industrialization and exports continued, though at a much lower level than in the early 1930s. The urbanization that was achieved in the context of collectivization and famine remained on a high level. In contrast to the Soviet case, China's system of exploiting the peasantry had to be "readjusted" in 1962. In most years, grain could not be exported in exchange for industrial technology but had to be bought on the capitalist world market. The rapid

urbanization of 1958–1960 had to be undone, and 20 million people were sent down to the countryside between 1962 and 1963. The urbanization process stopped for two decades. In defense of Mao, compared to Stalin, it must be said that under his leadership no second famine occurred. Does this mean that he was less ruthless than Stalin, or did he just believe another famine would represent a serious threat to the rule of the CCP?

DID SOCIALISM NEED FAMINE?

Collectivization did not necessarily produce famine, but it contributed to the starvation of millions when it was implemented in a very radical way in the Soviet Union in 1929–1931 and China in 1958 under backward conditions. The anarchist Kropotkin had already drawn the lesson from the French Revolution and the Paris Commune that a radical transformation of society could result in a serious urban supply crisis. He feared that the revolutionaries would turn against the countryside and drive the peasants into the arms of the counterrevolution.[13] His warning went unheeded. Some scholars even argue that the famines helped to break the resistance of the peasantry against full collectivization and grain procurements or even contend that Stalin organized the famine on purpose.[14] According to many other scholars, the regimes did not produce the famines deliberately. They broke out against the plans and wishes of the governments and took place in the context of a massive decline of food availability. However, we should ask whether the famines helped the regimes to enforce the new collective order.

The socialization of industry in China and the Soviet Union was achieved in a few years. The bourgeoisie was quite weak, and a great many workers supported the transformation to socialism, which included welfare benefits and better working conditions. The real challenge for the new regimes was the transformation of the countryside. Bukharin and also the post-Mao leadership in China argued that a slow transformation to socialism would have been a better strategy than the leaps. However, I have argued that the leadership around Stalin and Mao had political reasons for favoring the radical approach. In the Soviet Union, the voluntary and evolutionist cooperative movement did not show satisfying results in the countryside because most peasants were unwilling to join. Furthermore, in Stalin's view, the grain crisis of

1928 and urban dissatisfaction with the food supply opened a "window of opportunity" to carry out a crushing blow against the "kulaks" and "saboteurs" once and for all. In China, the CCP had already destroyed the old rural elites with the land reform of the early 1950s. Collectivization was less violent than in the Soviet Union, but in 1957 Mao Zedong was dissatisfied with the results of the new order. He wanted to go a step further with the establishment of the People's Communes. Backwardness was seen as a good starting point, as the government felt it would be more difficult to abolish private property after rural incomes had increased. In the autumn of 1958, the party leadership saw a chance to transform China into an industrial nation and enter the stage of communism within a short time. It was believed that socialism was a permanent struggle against both internal and external enemies. One could never know when the balance of power would turn against socialism, so "windows of opportunity" had to be used.

As a matter of fact, the famines harmed the peasantry's ability to carry out open rebellion. While in 1930 many rural uprisings took place in the Soviet Union, after 1933 devastated peasants were unable to challenge the new order by means of open resistance. Donald Filtzer has made a similar point, arguing that the Soviet famine of 1947 destroyed all hopes that the victory over Nazi Germany would relax the control and exploitation of workers and peasants.[15] Therefore, the famine was helpful in reestablishing the Stalinist order. In the PRC in 1956 and 1957 millions of peasants retreated from the collectives and made great efforts to keep more grain in the villages. The Socialist Education Campaign in the autumn of 1957 was aimed at crushing peasant resistance. The campaign succeeded in bringing escape from the agricultural collectives to a halt even before the famine demoralized the countryside.

I have argued that in both countries, the ruling Communist parties learned through the famine how to readjust relations with the peasants. After the famines the governments understood that they had to accept, like it or not, mixed ownership structures, including private plots. The governments learned to set procurement and taxation at levels that allowed the peasants to survive and the state to continue with industrialization. After this concession to the peasantry, the state was able to maintain collective agriculture. The new *kolkhoz* system and the new People's Communes that were born out of famine remained

relatively stable for four decades in the Soviet Union and two decades in China. In 1961 Khrushchev promised that the current generation would be able to experience communism in the near future, and he attempted to restrict the private plots of the peasants. These radical policies were only short-lived. After the fall of Khrushchev in 1964, the new government under Brezhnev finally made its peace with the private plots of the peasants, which produced large quantities of the country's potatoes, vegetables, meat, milk, and wool. In the Soviet Union, it took until 1985 for the system to change, when Mikhail Gorbachev became the leader of the party and challenged the 1933 post-famine system.[16] Furthermore, it can be said that Socialist systems were able to carry out reforms only in the aftermath of serious crises. Without disasters it was difficult to question the "general line" and to admit mistakes. In China and the Soviet Union, the Great Leap policies were linked with struggle among different factions. Only when the problems turned into nationwide famine were Stalin and Mao willing to introduce new policies to end the misery. It can be said that, at least in these cases, Socialist systems needed the lessons of famine in order to establish stable social order in the countryside.

However, the famines also led to many bad results for the ruling parties. The Chinese and the Russian revolutions had promised to end hunger and poverty. Famine questioned the legitimacy of the new regimes. Furthermore, the famines had a devastating impact on livestock. Peasants slaughtered livestock or ate the seed grain instead of feeding it to the animals. Chen Yun called these phenomena the competition between men and animals.[17] The state succeeded in maintaining collective agriculture, but it was very dependent on the work performance of the peasants. The peasants decided to keep productivity low because the system of collective agriculture failed to provide economic incentives.

Nonetheless, the famines did not destroy all the hopes and expectations of the populace. In China, the state was forced to import grain to feed the urban population and also to pay more attention to relief in the event of natural disasters.[18] Local cadres and peasants had learned that they could not rely on the state for survival, so they used many strategies such as the underreporting of production in order to keep more grain in the villages.[19] The state had to acknowledge limits in exploiting the peasantry. One lesson that the Chinese leaders learned from the famine was that the household registration system had to be

strictly enforced because it would be impossible to nourish an urban population of more than 20 percent of the total population at the expense of the countryside.

In 1962, the whole system of rural-urban relations was readjusted. With the "sending down" of 20 million people to the countryside, the state got rid of the responsibility for feeding these people and for purchasing grain in the countryside for them. The burden of the peasants decreased because important cities were fed with grain imports. I have argued that these policies were more central to end the famine than the increase of agricultural production in 1961 and 1962. Furthermore, the "sending down" policies of the educated youth during the Cultural Revolution should also be understood as a way to reduce the pressure on the urban supply system. The introduction of birth planning in 1963 was another lesson from the famine. The government acknowledged that the growth of the population should be related to food production. During the Cultural Revolution, Mao called upon the urban youth to rebel, but at the same time a breakdown of the urban and rural economy was prevented.

In the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, the system of ruthlessly exploiting the peasantry for the development of heavy industry came to an end. In the postwar years, the Soviet Union faced a serious labor shortage in the countryside. As a consequence, the party leaders understood that the conditions of rural life had to be improved. Under Khrushchev, the compulsory grain deliveries of the peasants and the restrictions on job mobility were abolished. The welfare state was expanded to the countryside. Peasants were entitled to pensions, a monthlong vacation, guaranteed wages, and paid maternity leave. Instead of a further exploitation of the peasantry, more and more grain was imported from the United States. While in 1931 5.6 million tons of grain were exported, 99.2 million tons were purchased abroad in 1973.[20] This figure could be read as evidence of the incapability of Socialist agriculture to increase productivity in a significant way, but it could also be read as a victory of the peasants over the state. The imports were mainly used to feed urban consumers and livestock, but they significantly lowered the burden of the peasants to produce for the cities. In the Soviet Union, the peasantry turned from a "milk cow" into an important receiver of social transfers from the state. Generally speaking, after the era of enforced hardships and sacrifice, the state had to pay more attention

to the needs of consumers in both the city and the countryside. In the post-famine era, the state had to pay a high price for the earlier belief that peasants' lives could be sacrificed for industrialization and urbanization. Ironically, the Soviet Communists who came to power with an urban revolution expanded the welfare state to the countryside in the 1960s, while the Chinese Communists made no serious efforts to do so until very recently.[21] The reasons might be that the Soviet Union was more developed than the PRC and that by 1970 the urban population already outnumbered the rural. The Soviet government was under pressure to improve the rural standards of living after the restrictions on peasant migration were abolished. In China, the household registration system was strictly enforced between 1962 and the early 1980s. As a result, peasants lacked an "exit option," and the state was less driven to raise rural living standards.

I have argued that no official anti-famine contract between the state and the population was established because the Communist Party did not allow people to talk about the famines and mourn the millions of victims openly. However, no deadly famine occurred in the Soviet Union after 1947 or in China after 1962. Last but not least, the Communist governments fulfilled their promise to end famine. In the eyes of a peasant who had experienced several famines in his or her lifetime, this might be seen as quite an achievement. In China, where tens of millions had starved to death during the late Qing dynasty, the Republican era, and the Great Leap, the escape from deadly famine after 1962 should be considered a major achievement of Socialist rule.

Drèze and Sen have argued that India experienced no nationwide famine after independence in 1949 because of its democracy and free press.[22] The cases of the Soviet Union after 1947 and China after 1962 show that one-party dictatorships are also able to prevent famine if the government has the will to readjust urban-rural relations and improve the flow of information within the system. It may be true that elected governments are under more pressure to prevent famines, but the lack of democracy cannot explain the catastrophes in the Soviet Union and China. However, it must be said that even without deadly famine, hunger and scarcity as phenomena of daily life in the poor provinces in China disappeared only after the launching of rural reforms with the introduction of the "household responsibility system" in the early 1980s. In the Soviet Union, supply problems with high-quality food

occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, but even after a very bad harvest in 1963, the country was not threatened by serious famine. Zhores Medvedev argues that without the massive food imports on the world market, the average urban diet in the late 1970s would have been worse than in the 1920s.[23] The Soviet government had to pay a high price to maintain social peace with urban consumers.

THE FAMINE AND THE ENDURING DISTANCE BETWEEN THE STATE AND RURAL SOCIETY

I have argued that the famines had a serious impact on the integration of the peasants into the Socialist state. While in Europe the project of nation building and the turning of "peasants into Frenchmen" (for example) had already started in the late eighteenth century, in the agrarian empires of Russia and China a large gap existed between the state and the rural population.[24] Loyalty to the emperor was important to keep center and periphery together, but state power had no strong roots in the local society, which was governed by local elites.

In Europe, the establishment of a modern mass army was crucial for the integration of the rural population into the project of nation building. In later decades, the expansion of the welfare state was also important to create a consciousness of citizenship. Some scholars argue that on the eve of World War I, peasants had not yet been transformed into Russians. The imperial army collapsed when peasant soldiers turned against the government. With the land reform, the Bolsheviks tried to win over the peasants for the revolution. The new regime was able to survive the civil war and the famine of 1921–1922 but had to retreat from its "war Communist" policies. The distance between state and rural society was still great. Suny argues: "The New Economic Policy (NEP) established a kind of truce between peasants and the state, which left the countryside and its grain largely under the control of the peasants."[25] The collectivization of 1929 spelled the destruction of the newly revitalized village communes. During the following famine, the peasants quickly learned that the state was unable or unwilling to guarantee their survival. Despite the fact that the Soviet constitution of 1936 abolished class discrimination, the peasants learned the bloody lesson during the famine that they were not equal citizens of the Socialist state.

In the Chinese empire, no state bureaucracy existed below the county level. Weigelin-Schwiedrzik and other scholars have argued that in the PRC too distance existed between the state and the rural society.[26] The CCP established grass-roots organizations of the party and mass organizations in almost every village, but cadres below the commune level were not on the payroll of the state and had to be financed by the local community. As a result, the central government budget was spared. The collectivization of agriculture can be seen as a process of stronger penetration of the rural society by the state. In 1953, the government decided that only with the monopoly of the grain trade could the urban supply crisis be overcome. With collectivization, the peasants were integrated into the Socialist construction step by step. In 1957, the press reported rural resentment that only the urban population enjoyed welfare, secure jobs, and health care, while the peasants had to feed the growing cities. In the beginning of the Great Leap, the government offered peasants a "new deal." It promised that the "iron rice bowl" would be extended to the countryside.[27] The new public dining halls would guarantee enough food for everyone, and kindergartens and old people's homes would provide care. In addition to the People's Liberation Army, it was planned that "everyone should become a soldier" *(quanmin jiebing)* in the rural militia. Due to the famine both projects of integration, rural welfare and the rural militia, failed. After the famine, a more moderate version of the People's Communes strengthened the power of local cadres and the villages because the state had to acknowledge the "natural boundaries" of villages and family. As a result, the state was unable to interfere in the rural society after 1962 as it had during the Great Leap. The household registration system forced the peasants to stay in their villages and thereby preserved the family ties and village communities. During the Cultural Revolution, only parts of the urban population participated in Mao's campaign enthusiastically. The peasants had to struggle for survival, and the revolutionary spirit in the countryside was almost gone.

It can be said that the famines disturbed the process of integrating the peasants peacefully into the new Socialist state. In the Soviet case, the German invasion of 1941 again changed relations between the state and the countryside. Stalin fought the war in order to defend the "holy Russian soil." The genocidal German policies of organized starvation

and mass killings prevented large parts of the Soviet population from allying with the invaders against their own government. The grain procurement system was able to provide the necessary resources to win the war. The liberation of Europe from fascism could be used as a justification for many of the hardships of the 1930s. However, the famine of 1947 showed that the well-being of the rural population was still not on Stalin's priority list. The process of integrating the peasants into Soviet society continued in the 1960s, when the welfare state was expanded to the countryside. For the first time in Russian history, rural people were legally equal to urban workers.[28] In contrast to the Soviet Union, the Chinese Communists fought only limited border wars after 1949. The Korean War (1950–1953) and the war against Vietnam (1979) had many victims, but China experienced no stress test in state-society relations such as the Soviet Union did during World War II.

FAMINE IN THE PERIPHERY, NATIONALITY POLICIES, AND COUNTER-MEMORY

The Great Leap famines also had a tremendous impact on government relations with nationalities in the periphery such as the Ukrainians and the Tibetans. The CPSU and CCP inherited huge multi-ethnic empires from the tsar and the Qing. Both parties felt it was necessary to win over the non-Russian and non-Han Chinese populations for socialism. In the first decade of power, they promoted a policy of "indigenization" of nationalities and "affirmative action." However, the famines disturbed this process of peaceful integration. The collectivization of livestock produced violent conflicts with the nomad populations in Kazakhstan, Central Asia, and the Tibetan areas in Amdo and Kham. In 1931, Stalin came to the conclusion that "national Communists" in Ukraine would sabotage grain collection, and he launched a bloody "purge."[29] In China, collectivization and famine contributed to an uprising in the Tibetan areas of Qinghai Province in 1958.[30] When the unrest spilled over to Tibet and culminated in the uprising of March 1959, the alliance between the Tibetan elite around the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and the CCP collapsed. In the aftermath of the famine, the political and economic systems in both countries became more centralized, and the heyday of "indigenization" was finally over. I have argued

that the famines interrupted the peaceful integration of Ukrainians and Tibetans into the Socialist states. The experiences of famine and terror caused long-lasting distrust.

The Tibetan government-in-exile and the Ukrainian diaspora in the United States and Canada used the experiences of hunger to create a nationalist counter-narrative. I consider the making of meaning as part of food politics. Because these narratives are very similar, I decided to choose Tibet and Ukraine as cases among the populations in the periphery. In the autobiography of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and reports of the Tibetan government-in-exile it is argued that Tibet never experienced any famine before the Chinese "occupation" in 1951. In the stories of Tibetans in exile who escaped from China, the experiences of hunger play an important role. Different food habits were used to underline the differences of the Tibetans from the Han Chinese. Hunger is presented as a direct result of Chinese exploitation. In the Ukrainian case, scholars in the diaspora developed the narrative that Stalin organized the famine on purpose as genocide against the Ukrainian nation. After Ukrainian independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, the Holodomor became the core of the new historiography of the nation state. Nationalists already argued in the case of the Irish potato famine of 1842–1848 that the occupying power, England, had organized the famine on purpose to harm the Irish nation. Furthermore, the Irish people were humiliated by having to eat famine foods. Only independence could prevent such a catastrophe from happening again. In the Tibetan and Ukrainian cases, it was the diaspora who kept the memory alive. The collective experience is used to map the nation as a suffering community, even beyond its borders.

As a matter of fact, famine is not very useful for drawing ethnic lines because at the local level neighbors turn against neighbors, family members steal from each other, and the strong survive at the cost of the weak. By arguing that the Soviet and Chinese famines were organized on purpose, nationalists draw an ethnic line between Ukrainians/Russians and Tibetans/Han Chinese. By doing so, they externalize conflicts inside the villages and project them onto the "occupying power." Such a national history constructs a new national identity based on victimhood or "collective trauma." Especially in Ukraine, the discourse of academics and intellectuals could be built on memories of the suffering of peasant families in the villages. In overcoming these social bound-

aries, the Holodomor became important for national identity. In Ukraine, the government built a memorial for the victims in the capital, but also in hundreds of villages ordinary people set up gravestones or crosses to remember their relatives who had starved to death.[31] By using terms such as "genocide" or "holocaust" to define the famine, Ukrainian historians and politicians can link their claims with international law and global memory and thereby mobilize support in Western societies. It can be said that the campaigns of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and the Ukrainian government under President Victor Yushchenko have been successful.

In order to counter the Tibetan exile argument that occupation brought hunger and misery to the people, Chinese historians developed a narrative of liberation. The main arguments in the Chinese version of modern Tibetan history remain unchanged, even after the reforms of 1978. It is argued that the soldiers of the PLA "ate mice" on the new Long March to the "peaceful liberation" of Tibet instead of burdening the local population. Parts of the Tibetan government were accused of waging a war of starvation against the Chinese Army by hiding grain and refusing to sell it in the early 1950s. The narrative of class struggle is still dominant. While Tibetan exile sources emphasize that food was taken to feed the Chinese Army, Chinese sources argue that famine was prevented by moderate taxation and grain imports after the uprising of 1959. It is further argued that the destruction of the theocratic system and the domination of the monasteries liberated the Tibetan peasants from the burden of feeding a huge population of monks. While many sources have been published in China on the famine, the food supply in Tibet in the 1960s remains a well-kept secret. The Tibetan issue is too sensitive to allow research on the question of whether the Tibet Autonomous Region was affected by famines after 1961. The ongoing conflict in Tibet shows that neither propaganda nor economic aid programs have succeeded in convincing large parts of the Tibetan population to see themselves as part of the Chinese multi-ethnic state.

IN THE END: FAILURE OF COMMUNISM IN THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA

This book has shown that famine had a central impact on the development of socialism in the Soviet Union and China. In the first decades

of their rule, the Socialist regimes failed to provide entitlements to food for the majority of the population. A hierarchy of rationing and supply was established to the disadvantage of the rural population in the Soviet Union in 1929 and in China in 1955. As a result of ambitious Great Leap strategies to escape poverty and backwardness, the Socialist states overburdened themselves with feeding a rapidly increasing urban population at the expense of the countryside, exporting grain in exchange for industrial goods, and building up grain stocks against the background of frequent natural disasters. A permanent struggle between the state and the peasants over the agricultural surplus resulted in a politicization of hunger in which the definition of an adequate ration became part of the conflict itself. Party leaders often believed that peasants feigned hunger in order to sabotage grain procurements. After years of distrust toward the peasants, the governments underestimated or even ignored the extent of the famines and human suffering.

During the famines, Stalin and Mao acted quite rationally in terms of the regime, at least in the field of food policies, but not wisely. By preventing rural famine from turning into serious urban famine and unrest, the governments were able to secure the stability of the center and therefore of the state. It seems that they did not consider the deaths of millions of peasants a great danger for the legitimacy of the revolutionary regimes. The reason might be that the Bolsheviks had already survived bloody civil war and the famine that followed. It is unclear how much the Chinese Communists knew about the Soviet famines, but it was obvious to them that Stalin's rule had survived more than two decades, despite radical collectivization, deportations, "purges," and war. However, the Great Leap strategies pushed the economic systems far beyond their limits. When the damage to agriculture caused by radical collectivization and the rural famines threatened the industrial programs and food supply in the cities, Stalin and Mao were forced to make major concessions to the peasants. The famines in the Soviet Union and China may have contributed to forcing the peasantry into the state economy. However, in order to restore agricultural production, the government had to accept a mixed economy and ownership structures in the countryside. The status quo of the post-famine order was never challenged during Mao's or Stalin's lifetimes. Unlike during the NEP in the 1920s in the Soviet Union or the moderate period in 1956–1957 in China, it proved impossible to revoke the concessions

made to the peasants after the Great Leap famines. The transformation to state ownership of industry and the integration of the urban workers into the new Socialist welfare state succeeded relatively easily in a short time. In contrast to these achievements, the further path to communism was cut off in the countryside as a result of famine. In addition, the Communist parties lost some of their legitimacy in the eyes of the rural population because the Russian and Chinese revolutions had promised the end of hunger. Due to the contradictions between the Socialist economy in the cities and the mixed economy in the countryside, commodity exchanges and money could not be abolished. In view, the failure to transform the countryside was a major reason why the construction of socialism in China and the Soviet Union did not succeed in the long term and Stalin's and Mao's revolutions were unsustainable.

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Notes

Introduction

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68. Ibid., 104–105.

69. Ganson, *The Soviet Famine of 1946/47*, 105, 129.

70. Based on Chinese population statistics that were published in the early 1980s, scholars offer different estimates. Peng Xizhe has calculated 23 million deaths in fourteen provinces ("Demographic Consequences of the Great Leap Forward in China's Provinces," *Population and Development Review* 13, no. 4 [1987]: 649). Ansley Coale came to the conclusion that 16.5 million people died ("Population Trends, Population Policy, and Population Studies in China," *Population and Development Review* 7, no. 1 [1981]: 85–97), and Basil Ashton and Kenneth Hill counted 30 million deaths and 30 million missing births ("Famine in China, 1958–1961," *Population and Development Review* 10, no. 4 [1984]: 614). Jasper Becker estimated 43–46 million casualties on the basis of an internal investigation by the Chinese government (*Hungry Ghosts: China's Secret Famine* [London: Murray, 1996], 272). Cao Shuji used the published population statistics from county gazettes *(xianzhi)* and arrived at an estimate of 32,458,000 irregular deaths between 1958 and 1962 in the whole country (*Da jihuang* [The Great Famine] [Xianggang: Shidai guoji chuban youxiangongsi, 2005]), 282. Frank Dikötter believes that 45 million should stand as the minimum of excess deaths. He used Cao's number as a baseline and added an estimate based on some local archival files (*Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958–1962* [London: Bloomsbury, 2010], 333).

71. For an overview regarding the debate on the reasons for the famine, see Felix Wemheuer, *Steinnudeln: Ländliche Erinnerungen und staatliche Vergangenheitsbewältigung der "Großen Sprung"-Hungersnot in der chinesischen Provinz Henan* [Stone Noodles: Rural and Official Memory of the Great Leap Famine in the Chinese Province of Henan] (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2007), 6–8.

72. Most Chinese scholars today support the evaluation of President Liu Shaoqi, who quoted a peasant in 1962 as saying that 30 percent of the failure of the Great Leap was due to nature and 70 percent was man-made; Lui Shaoqi, "Zai kuoda de zhongyang gongzuo huiyi shang de jianghua" [Speech on the Expanded Working Conference of the Central Committee], in *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian* [A Collection of Important Documents since the Founding of the State], ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997), vol. 15, 88. The Chinese scholar Jin Hui argues that data from 120 local hydrology stations do not support the thesis that the droughts between 1959 and 1961 were the most serious in the history of the People's Republic. He believes the 30 percent decline in agricultural production in 1959 and 1960 was mainly caused by the policies of the Great Leap Forward ("'Sannian ziran zaihai' beiwanglu" [Memorandum on the "Three Years of Natural Disaster"], *Shehui*, no. 4 [1993]; http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wk.asp; accessed May 10, 2010). For another example, see Yang Jisheng, *Mubei: Zhongguo liushi niandai dajihuang jishi* [Tombstone: A Record of the Chinese Famine in the Sixties] (Hong Kong: Tiandi, 2008), 2:576–587.

73. Y. Y. Kueh, *Agricultural Instability in China, 1931–90: Weather, Technology, and Institutions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 260.

74. Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu jihuasi, ed., *Zhongguo nongcun jingji tongji daquan 1949–1986* [A Complete Collection of Statistics Regarding

the Rural Economy of China *1949–1986*] (Beijing: Nongye chubanshe, 1989), 354–356.

75. For a detailed overview regarding the Great Leap famine in China, see Kimberley Manning and Felix Wemheuer, "Introduction," in *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China's Great Leap Forward and Famine*, ed. Kimberley Manning and Felix Wemheuer (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 1–27.

76. Wheatcroft, "Famines and Food Crisis of 1946/47."

77. See also Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, 285, and Chen Yixin, "Famine, Disease, and Public Health during China's Great Leap Forward," unpublished paper presented at the AAS annual meeting, Philadelphia, March 28, 2010.

78. Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, 413.

79. Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland's Great Famine: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2006), 202.

80. Alexander De Waal, "A Re-Assessment of Entitlement Theory in the Light of the Recent Famines in Africa," *Development and Change,* no. 21 (1990): 481.

81. Devereux, "Famine in the Twentieth Century," 5.

82. Felix Wemheuer, *Chinas "Großer Sprung nach vorne" (1958–1961): Von der kommunistischen Offensive in die Hungersnot—Intellektuelle erinnern sich* [China's "Great Leap Forward" (1958–1961): From the Communist Offensive to Famine—Intellectuals Remember] (Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2004).

83. Wemheuer, *Steinnudeln*.

84. Thomas Bernstein, "Stalinism, Famine, and Chinese Peasants," *Theory and Society* 13, no. 3 (1984): 339–377; Dennis Tao Yang, "China's Agricultural Crisis and Famine of 1959–1961: A Survey and Comparison to Soviet Famines," *Comparative Economic Studies*, no. 50 (2008): 1–29; Felix Wemheuer, "Regime Changes of Memories: Creating Official History of the Ukrainian and Chinese Famines under State Socialism and after the Cold War," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 10, no. 1 (2009): 31–59. One outcome of an international workshop on "Hunger, Nutrition and Rationing under State Socialism," which was held at the University of Vienna in 2008, is Matthias Middell and Felix Wemheuer, eds., *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierungssysteme unter dem Staatssozialismus* [Hunger, Nutrition and Rationing under State Socialism] (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2011). An English version of the conference volume was published by Leipzig University Press under the title *Hunger and Scarcity under State-Socialism* in 2012. Stephen Wheatcroft also organized two workshops on "Famine in Russia and China" at the University of Melbourne in March 2009 and June 2010.

85. For example, see Jin Chongji, ed., *Mao Zedong zhuan, 1893–1949* [A Biography of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: Zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 2004), 2 vols., and Jin Chongji, ed., *Zhou Enlai zhuan* [A Biography of Zhou Enlai] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1998), 4 vols.

86. For example: Yu Xiguang, *Dayuejin, kurizi* [Great Leap Forward: Bitter Life] (Hong Kong: Shidai chaoliu chuban youxiangongsi, 2005); Dong Fu, *Maimiao qing, caihua huang* [Wheat Sprouts Green, Rape Flowers Yellow] (Hong Kong: Tianyuan shuwu, 2008); Qiao Peihua, *Xinyang shijian* [The Xinyang Disaster] (Hong Kong: Kaifang chubanshe, 2009); Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*.

87. See Zhou Xun, ed., *The Great Famine in China, 1958–1962: A Documentary History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

88. For more details, see Cormac Ó Gráda, "Great Leap into Famine: A Review Essay," *Population and Development Review* 37, no. 1 (2011): 195–196, and Felix Wemheuer, "Sites of Horror: 'Mao's Great Famine,'" *China Journal*, no. 66 (2011): 155–162.

89. Zhou Xun, ed., *The Great Famine in China, 1958–1962*.

90. One of the best investigations of local famine is still Wang Gengjin, *Xiangcun sanshinian: Fengyang nongcun shehui jingji fazhan shilu 1949–1983* [Thirty Years of Villages: A Chronology of the Social and Economic Development in the Countryside of Fengyang] (Beijing: Nongcun duwu chubanshe, 1989), 2 vols. It deals with Fengyang County in Anhui Province.

91. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, ed., *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao* [Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China] (Baoding: Hebei sheng gongxiaoshe Baoding yinshuachang yinshua, 1989), 2 vols.

92. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai: Tonggou tongxiao shi* [The Decades of the Cards: A History of the United Purchase and Sales System] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2008), and Luo Pinghan, *Daguofan: Gonggongshitang shimo* [Eating out of the Big Pot: The History of the Public Dining Halls] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2001).

93. Vernon, *Hunger*, 2.

94. Ibid., 8.

95. For example: Yixin Chen, "Under the Same Maoist Sky: Accounting for Death Rate Discrepancies in Anhui and Jiangxi," in Manning and Wemheuer, *Eating Bitterness*, 197–225, and Yang Dali, *Calamity and Reform in China*.

96. Carole Counihan and Penny van Esterik, "Introduction," in *Food and Culture: A Reader*, ed. Carole Counihan and Penny van Esterik (New York: Routledge, 1997), 1.

97. Ralph Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China: Mao's Great Leap Forward Famine and the Origins of Righteous Resistance in Da Fo Village* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 226–230; Gao Wangling, *Renmin gongshe shiqi Zhongguo nongmin fan xingwei diaocha* [Investigation of Everyday Forms of Resistance of the Chinese Peasants in the Era of the People's Communes] (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2006).

98. Mark Tauger made this argument in the context of the Soviet famine, in "Le Livre Noire du Communisme on the Soviet Famine of 1932–1933" (1998), 10–11; http://www.as.wvu.edu/history/Faculty/Tauger/Tauger,%20Chapter%20for%20Roter%20Holocaust%20book%20b.pdf; accessed May 5, 2011.

99. See Lynne Viola, "Popular Resistance in the Stalinist 1930s: Soliloquy of a Devil's Advocate," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 1 (2000): 45–69, and Mark B. Tauger, "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930–39: Resistance and Adaptation," in *Rural Adaptation in Russia*, ed. Stephen K. Wegren (London: Routledge, 2005), 66–68.

100. The most detailed study on the Chinese system of grain transfers is still Walker, *Food Grain Procurement and Consumption in China*. Walker was mainly reevaluat-

ing the official grain statistics and the transfers among provinces. My approach is more focused on the interaction between state and society and conflicts about food.

101. Dennis Tao Yang, "China's Agricultural Crisis and Famine of 1959–1961," 17–19. I have written on the intellectual history of public dining in a different context. Only in the very radical periods of the Soviet and Chinese great leaps was public dining considered a new form of collective living, part of the policies to replace the nuclear family as an institution. However, in 1930 the Central Committee of the CPSU criticized architects who designed communal houses without space for the family. Elke Pistorius, ed., *Der Architektenstreit nach der Revolution: Zeitgenössische Texte, Russland 1920–1932* [The Architectural Dispute after the Revolution: Contemporary Texts, Russia 1920–1932] (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1992), 112. In China, the leadership realized in the winter of 1958–1959 that it was impossible to allow the peasants to eat as much as they wished. The government tried to restore the principle of distribution according to work performance *(anlao fenpei)* and emphasized that the family should not be replaced by the commune. The moments of plenty and the utopian mood did not last long, and for this reason I have chosen not to include a chapter on public dining in this book. For more details, see Felix Wemheuer, "Eating in Utopia: An Intellectual History of Public Dining," in *Hunger and Scarcity under State-Socialism*, ed. Matthias Middell and Felix Wemheuer (Leipzig: Leipzig University Press, 2012), 277–302.

102. Yang Dali makes a strong link among the establishment of the People's Commune, the famine, and decollectivization in *Calamity and Reform in China*, 240–242.

103. Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 7.

104. Drèze and Sen, *Hunger and Public Action*, 214.

105. Stephen Wheatcroft, "Die sowjetische und die chinesische Hungersnot in historischer Perspektive" [The Soviet and Chinese Famines in Historical Perspective], in Middell and Wemheuer, *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierungssysteme unter dem Staatssozialismus*, 88.

106. Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, *China's Road to Disaster: Mao, Central Politicians, and Provincial Leaders in the Unfolding of the Great Leap Forward, 1955–1959* (London: M. E. Sharpe, 1999). For other examples, see David Bachman, *Bureaucracy, Economy, and Leadership in China: The Institutional Origins of the Great Leap Forward* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Michael Schoenhals, *Saltationist Socialism: Mao Zedong and the Great Leap Forward* (Stockholm: University of Stockholm, Department of Oriental Languages, 1987); Jean-Luc Domenach, *The Origins of the Great Leap Forward: The Case of One Chinese Province* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995); Alfred Chan, *Mao's Crusade: Politics and Policy Implementation in China's Great Leap Forward* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

107. Detailed descriptions of suffering, ways of dying, and cannibalism or violence by cadres during the Chinese famine can be found in Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*; Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*; and Wemheuer, *Steinnudeln*.

Epigraph to page 23: Josef Stalin, "Speech at the First All-Union Conference of Stakhanovites," in Josef Stalin, *Collected Works*, 14:99; http://www.marx2mao.com/PDFs/StWorks14.pdf; accessed February 5, 2013.

Chapter 1. The "Tribute" of the Peasantry in Times of Food Availability Decline

1. For the latest research on the Soviet impact on China, see Li Hua-yu, *Mao and the Economic Stalinization of China, 1948–1953* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), and Thomas Bernstein and Li Hua-yu, eds., *China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949–Present* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010).

2. Dorothy Atkinson, *The End of the Russian Land Commune, 1905–1930* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1983), 375. For research on the *mir*, see Roger Bartlett, ed., *Land Commune and Peasant Community in Russia: Communal Forms in Imperial and Early Soviet Society* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, in association with the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1990). See also Philip C. Huang, *Code, Custom and Legal Practice in China: The Qing and the Republic Compared* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 99–118.

3. Ralph Melville, "Bevölkerungsentwicklung und demographischer Strukturwandel bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg" [Population Development and Demographic Changes until World War I], in *Handbuch der Geschichte Russlands*, vol. 3: *1856–1945: Von den autokratischen Reformen zum Sowjetstaat*, part 2, ed. Gottfried Schramm (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1992), 1065, 1013, 1146; Lu Yu, ed., *Xin Zhongguo renkou wushinian* [50 Years' Population of New China] (Beijing: Zhongguo renkou chubanshe, 2004), 1:633.

4. According to the Penn World Tables, China's GDP per capita was the lowest in the world in each year between 1952 and 1957; Cormac Ó Gráda, "Great Leap into Famine: A Review Essay," *Population and Development Review* 37, no. 1 (2011): 192.

5. Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (London: Verso, 2001), 361–375.

6. Ibid., 7.

7. Deng Tuo, *Quanji* [Collected Works] (Guangdong: Huacheng chubanshe, 2002), 1:108–109.

8. Xia Mingfang, *Minguo shiqi ziran zaihai yu xiangcun shehui* [Natural Disasters and Rural Society in the Republican Age] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000), 395–399. For an overview of the Chinese research on famines in the Republican era, see pp. 7–27.

9. Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley, "The Loss of Heaven: Changing Responses to Famine in Late Imperial and Modern China, 1876–1961," unpublished paper, 2010.

10. For details, see Odoric Wou, "Food Shortage and Japanese Grain Extraction in Henan," in *China at War: Regions of China 1937–1945*, ed. Stephen R. MacKinnon, Dianna Lary, and Ezra Vogel (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 175–206.

11. Dwight H. Perkins, *Agricultural Development in China, 1368–1968* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 155.

12. Frank Dikötter, *The Age of Openness: China before Mao* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 87.

13. Ibid., 88.

14. Frank Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958–1962* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010).

15. Dikötter, *The Age of Openness*, 12.

16. For example, see also Heinz-Dietrich Löwe, "Von der Industrialisierung zur ersten Revolution, 1890–1904" [From Industrialization to the First Revolution, 1890–1904], in *Handbuch der Geschichte Russlands*, part 1, vol. 3: *1856–1945* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1983), 203–336.

17. Stephen G. Wheatcroft, "Crises and the Condition of the Peasantry in Late Imperial Russia," in *Peasant Economy, Culture, and Politics of European Russia, 1800–1921*, ed. Esther Kingston-Mann and Timothy Mixter (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 135.

18. Gao Wangling, *Zhengfu zuoyong he jiaose wenti de lishi kaocha* [Historical Investigation of the Role and Function of Government] (Beijing: Haiyang chubanshe, 2002), 234.

19. Stephen Wheatcroft, "Die sowjetische und die chinesische Hungersnot in historischer Perspektive" [The Soviet and Chinese Famines in Historical Perspective], in *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierungssysteme unter dem Staatssozialismus [Hunger, Nutrition and Rationing under State Socialism]*, ed. Matthias Middell and Felix Wemheuer (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2011), 89.

20. Wheatcroft, "Crises and the Condition of the Peasantry in Late Imperial Russia," 135.

21. Ibid., 133–134.

22. David Moon, "Peasants and Agriculture," in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 2: *1689–1917*, ed. Dominic Lieven (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 386.

23. David Moon, "Russia's Rural Economy, 1800–1930," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 4 (2000): 687.

24. Ibid., 687.

25. R. E. F. Smith and David Christian, *Bread and Salt: A Social and Economic History of Food and Drink in Russia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 336–337.

26. Arcadius Kahan, *Russian Economic History: The Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 137–141.

27. Nicholas Ganson, *The Soviet Famine of 1946/47 in Global and Historical Perspective* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 119.

28. Stephen Wheatcroft, "The 1891–92 Famine in Russia," in *Economy and Society in Russia and the Soviet Union, 1860–1930: Essays for Olga Crisp*, ed. Linda Edmondson and Peter Waldron (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 58.

29. Richard G. Robbins, *Famine in Russia 1891–1892: The Imperial Government Responds to a Crisis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975).

30. Jennifer Eileen Downs, "Famine Policy and Discourses on Famine in Ming China 1368–1644"; PhD dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1995, 42.

31. For details, see Pierre-Etienne Will, R. Bin Wong, and James Lee, *Nourishing the People: The State Civilian Granary System in China, 1650–1850* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies, 1991).

32. Walter Hampton Mallory, *China: Land of Famine* (New York: American Geographical Society, 1926), 67–68.

33. Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron: Cultural Responses to Famine in Nineteenth-Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 94.

34. Robbins, *Famine in Russia 1891–1892*, 19.

35. Ibid., 168. For the peasants' perceptions of the famine, see Leonid Heretz, *Russia on the Eve of Modernity: Popular Religion and Traditional Culture under the Last Tsars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 130–144.

36. Wheatcroft, "The 1891–92 Famine in Russia," 58. See also Robbins, *Famine in Russia 1891–1892*, 170.

37. Löwe, "Von der Industrialisierung zur ersten Revolution, 1890–1904," 233–234.

38. Robbins, *Famine in Russia 1891–1892*, 167.

39. Ibid., 176.

40. Hans J. Van de Ven, *War and Nationalism in China: 1925–1945* (London: Routledge, 2003), 281–282.

41. For details, see Lars T. Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia, 1914–1921* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

42. Eric Lohr, "War and Revolution, 1914–1917," in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, Vol. 2: *1689–1917*, ed. Dominic Lieven (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 661.

43. W. I. Lenin, *Ausgewählte Werke* [Collected Works] (Berlin [East]: Dietz Verlag, 1984), 2:581.

44. For example, see "Shanganning jijiu Jiang zao zai huang" [First Aid for Famine That Was Manufactured by Chiang Kai-shek in Shanxi, Gansu, and Ningxia], in *RMRB*, January 31, 1948.

45. Personal communication from Stephen Wheatcroft, September 2011.

46. James Z. Lee and Wang Feng, *One Quarter of Humanity: Malthusian Mythology and Chinese Realities, 1700–2000* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 7.

47. Ibid., 36.

48. Ibid., 6.

49. Gilbert Rozman, "Concluding Assessment: The Soviet Impact on Chinese Society," in Bernstein and Li, *China Learns from the Soviet Union*, 518.

50. For details, see Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth J. Perry, "Embracing Uncertainty: Guerrilla Policy Style and Adaptive Governance in China," in *Mao's Invisible Hand: The Political Foundations of Adaptive Governance in China*, ed. Sebastian Heilmann and Elizabeth J. Perry (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 11–14.

51. Thomas Bernstein, "Introduction: The Complexities of Learning from the Soviet Union," in Bernstein and Li, *China Learns from the Soviet Union*, 7.

52. Ibid., 9.

53. Ibid., 16.

54. Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," in *Cultural Revolution in Russia 1928–31*, ed. Sheila Fitzpatrick (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 17–21.

55. For example, see Richard Stites, *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 201.

56. Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution as Class War," 25; Li Rui, *Dayuejin qinliji* [Personal Account of the Great Leap Forward] (Haikou: Nanfang chubanshe, 1999), 2:537–338.

57. Felix Wemheuer, "Die Konstruktion des neuen Menschen: Diskurse des chinesischen Kommunismus während des 'Großen Sprungs nach vorne' 1958" [The Construction of New Men: Discourses of Chinese Communism during the Great Leap Forward 1958], in *Menschenbilder in China*, ed. Lena Henningsen and Heiner Roetz (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2009), 95–114.

58. For details, see David Hoffman, *Stalinist Values: The Cultural Norms of Soviet Modernity, 1917–1941* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003). An interesting study of the rise in consumption of Soviet champagne, caviar, ice cream, and chocolate during Stalin's "Neo-NEP" in the mid-1930s is Jukka Gronow, *Caviar with Champagne: Common Luxury and the Ideals of the Good Life in Stalin's Russia* (Oxford: Berg, 2003).

59. János Kornai, *The Socialist System: The Political Economy of Communism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 19.

60. David Bachman believes that in China the government used the strategy of a great leap in 1956 ("small leap forward"), 1958–1960, 1969, and 1977–1978. According to him, the high rate of investment in heavy industry created disproportion and imbalance in the economy. Agriculture and light industry were neglected, and consumer goods failed to keep pace with the money in circulation. Mass mobilization was combined with a decentralization of power to lower-level cadres. The leaps were always replaced by periods of readjustment among the different sectors of the economy; David Bachman, *Bureaucracy, Economy, and Leadership in China: The Institutional Origins of the Great Leap Forward* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 222. While Bachman explains these shifts of policy through the struggle among different interest groups in the bureaucracy, I focus on the interactions between peasants and the government. Only the Great Leap Forward of 1958–1960 included a radical program for the social transformation of the society and utopian ideas of a direct transformation to communism. The other leaps caused some imbalances in the economy but did not bring the country close to famine. In contrast to the Chinese leaps, the Soviet leap of 1929 and the first five-year plan brought more centralization in economic planning and political power, not less.

61. Thomas Bernstein, "Stalinism, Famine, and Chinese Peasants," *Theory and Society* 13, no. 3 (1984): 339–377, and Vivienne Shue, *Peasant China in Transition: The Dynamics of Development toward Socialism 1949–1956* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

62. See Lynne Viola, V. P. Danilov, N. A. Ivnitskii, and Denis Kozlov, eds., *The War against the Peasantry, 1927–1930: The Tragedy of the Soviet Countryside* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); for the Chinese case, see Wang Yanni,

"An Introduction to the ABC's of Communization: A Case Study of Macheng County," in *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China's Great Leap Forward and Famine*, ed. Kimberley Manning and Felix Wemheuer (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 167.

63. Lenin, *Ausgewählte Werke*, 2:538.

64. Dietrich Beyrau, *Petrograd, 25. Oktober 1917: Die russische Revolution und der Aufstieg des Kommunismus* [Petrograd, October 25, 1917: The Russian Revolution and the Rise of Communism] (Munich: dtv, 2004), 52.

65. Stephan Merl, *Die Anfänge der Kollektivierung in der Sowjetunion: Der Übergang zur staatlichen Reglementierung der Produktions- und Marktbeziehungen im Dorf, 1928–1930* [The Origins of Collectivization in the Soviet Union: The Transition to the Regimentation of Production and Market Relations by the State in the Villages, 1928–1930] (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1985), 101.

66. Lynne Viola, *The Best Sons of the Fatherland: Workers in the Vanguard of Soviet Collectivization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 211.

67. Michael Ellman, "The Role of Leadership Perceptions and of Intent in the Soviet Famine of 1931–1934," *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, no. 6 (2005): 827–828.

68. James Hughes, *Stalinism in a Russian Province: A Study of Collectivization and Dekulakization in Siberia* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 209.

69. Daniel Thorniley, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Rural Communist Party, 1927–38* (Hampshire: Macmillan Press, in association with the Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Birmingham, 1988), 190–192.

70. Jürgen Osterhammel, *Shanghai 30. Mai 1925: Die chinesische Revolution* [Shanghai May 30, 1925: The Chinese Revolution] (Munich: dtv 1997), 232.

71. Steve A. Smith, *Revolution and the People in Russia and China: A Comparative History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 193.

72. Yu Liu, "Why Did It Go So High? Political Mobilization and Agricultural Collectivization in China," *China Quarterly*, no. 187 (2006): 732.

73. Joachim Durau, *Arbeitskooperation in der chinesischen Landwirtschaft: Die Veränderung bäuerlicher Produktionsbeziehungen zwischen Agrarrevolution und Kollektivierung, 1927–1957* [Cooperatives in Chinese Agriculture: Changes in the Rural Relations of Production between the Agrarian Revolution and Collectivization, 1927–1957] (Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1983), 338.

74. Yu Liu, "Why Did It Go So High?," 738–739.

75. According to the official census, the Soviet Union had a population of around 148 million in 1926 and 161 million in 1937. China's population in 1953 was around 601 million.

76. Felix Wemheuer, "'The Grain Problem Is an Ideological Problem': Discourses of Hunger in the 1957 Socialist Education Campaign," in Manning and Wemheuer, *Eating Bitterness*, 123.

77. Felix Wemheuer, *Mao Zedong* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 2010), 83–84.

78. Lenin, *Ausgewählte Werke*, 3:225 and 654.

79. Ibid., 680.

80. Josef Stalin, *Werke* [Works] (Dortmund: Roter Morgen Verlag, Nachdruck, 1976), 12:178.

81. Karl Marx, *Das Kapital: Kritik der Politischen Ökonomie* [Capital: Critique of Political Economy] (Berlin [East]: Dietz Verlag, 1951), 1:801–802. See also Jim Glassman, "Primitive Accumulation, Accumulation by Dispossession, Accumulation by 'Extra-Economic Means,'" *Progress in Human Geography*, 30, no. 5 (2006): 608–625.

82. Evgenij Preobraschenskij, "Noch einmal über die sozialistische Akkumulation: Eine Antwort an den Genossen Bucharin" [On Socialist Accumulation Again: An Answer to Comrade Bucharin], in *Die Linke Opposition in der Sowjetunion*, vol. 3: *1925–1926*, ed. Ulf Wolter (Berlin: Olle and Wolter, 1976), 194–197.

83. Josef Stalin, "Industrialization and the Grain Problem," in *J. V. Stalin Collected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1954), 11:167; emphasis in original.

84. Ibid., 168–169.

85. Ibid., 170; emphasis in original.

86. For example, see Renmin chubanshe, ed., *Sulian liangshi wenti de lilun he zhengce wenxian* [Documents of the Theory and Policy Regarding the Grain Problem in the Soviet Union] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1955). This collection mainly includes speeches and statements from Lenin and Stalin. A Chinese translation of a relatively critical book on the Soviet collectivization by the American scholar Woerfu Ladeqinsiji (Chinese transcription) was published in 1950 and republished in 1963 and 1964 for internal use: *Sulian nongye de shehuihua: Jiti nongzhuang he guoying nongchang de zhenxiang* [The Socialization of Soviet Agriculture: The Truth about the Kolkhozes and State Farms] (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan chuban, 1964). It remains unclear how much the CCP leaders knew about the Soviet famine. For example, see Mao Zedong, "Lun shi da guanxi" [On the Ten Great Relations (April 25, 1956)], in *Mao Zedong Wenji* [Selected Works of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999), 7:24–25.

87. Bernstein, "Stalinism, Famine, and Chinese Peasants," 362.

88. Stalin, "Industrialization and the Grain Problem," 181.

89. Elena Osokina, *Our Daily Bread: Socialist Distribution and the Art of Survival in Stalin's Russia, 1927–1941* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), 33.

90. Quoted in Viola, Danilov, Ivnitskii, and Kozlov, *The War against the Peasantry, 1927–1930*, 99.

91. A detailed description is Tiejun Cheng, Mark Selden, and Timothy Cheek, "The Construction of Spatial Hierarchies: China's *Hukou* and *Danwei* System," in *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China*, ed. Timothy Cheek and Tony van Saich (London: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 30. See also Guo Shutian, *Shiheng de Zhongguo: Nongcun chengshihua de guoqu, xianzai yu weilai* [Unbalanced China: The Past, Present, and Future of the Urbanization of the Countryside] (Shijiazhuang: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1990).

92. Xiao Donglian, "Zhongguo eryuan shehui jiegou xingcheng de lishi kaocha" [A Historical Investigation of the Dual System of the Chinese Society], *Dangshi yanjiu* [Research in Party History], no. 1 (2005): 8–11.

93. Ke Jiadong, "Chengxiang eryuan shehui shi zenyang xingcheng de?" [How Did the Dual Society Take Shape?], *Shuwu* [Book Room] 5 (2003); http://www.360doc.com/content/07/0512/10/16746_495649.shtml; accessed April 1, 2010.

94. For more details, see Suzanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, "The Distance between State and Rural Society in the PRC: Reading Document No. 1," *Journal of Environmental Management*, no. 87 (2008): 217.

95. Oleg Khlevnyuk and R. W. Davies, "The End of Rationing in the Soviet Union, 1934–1935," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 51, no. 4 (1999): 559–560.

96. Ibid., 573.

97. R. W. Davies and Stephen G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931–1933* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 446.

98. Mark B. Tauger, "The 1932 Harvest and the Famine of 1933," *Slavic Review* 50, no. 1 (1991): 84.

99. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai: Tonggou tongxiao shi* [The Decades of the Cards: A History of the United Purchase and Sales System] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2008), 280.

100. Wen Tiejun, *Zhongguo nongcun jiben jingji zhidu yanjiu* [Research on the Basic Economic System of Rural China] (Beijing: Zhongguo jingji chubanshe, 2000), 175–177.

101. Dennis Tao Yang, "China's Agricultural Crisis and Famine of 1959–1961: A Survey and Comparison to Soviet Famines," *Comparative Economic Studies*, no. 50 (2008): 24–25.

102. Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu jihuasi, ed., *Zhongguo nongcun jingji tongji daquan 1949–1986* [A Complete Collection of Statistics Regarding the Rural Economy of China *1949–1986*] (Beijing: Nongye chubanshe, 1989), 410–411.

103. Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, 435; Luo Pinghan, *Gongshe! Gongshe! Nongcun renmingongshe* [Communes! Communes! The Rural People's Communes] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2003), 92–93.

104. Peter Kropotkin, *Die Eroberung des Brotes und andere Schriften* [The Conquest of Bread and Other Writings] (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1973), 122–126.

105. Wheatcroft, "Die sowjetische und chinesische Hungersnot in historischer Perspektive," 115, 119.

106. R. W. Davies, *The Socialist Offensive: The Collectivization of Soviet Agriculture, 1929–1930 (The Industrialization of Soviet Russia 1)* (London: Macmillan, 1980), 443.

107. Luo Pinghan, *Gongshe! Gongshe! Nongcun renmingongshe*, 51.

108. For example, see Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, 190.

109. Ralph Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China: Mao's Great Leap Forward Famine and the Origins of Righteous Resistance in Da Fo Village* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 177–181, and Gao Wangling, "A Study of Chinese Peasant 'Counter-Action,'" in Manning and Wemheuer, *Eating Bitterness*, 274–278.

110. Michael Ellman, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33 Revisited," *Europe-Asia Studies* 59, no. 4 (2007): 668.

111. Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China*, 200–206.

112. Felix Wemheuer, *Steinnudeln: Ländliche Erinnerungen und staatliche Vergangenheitsbewältigung der "Großen Sprung"-Hungersnot in der chinesischen*

Provinz Henan [Stone Noodles: Rural and Official Memory of the Great Leap Famine in the Chinese Province of Henan] (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2007), 198–199.

113. William Moskoff, *The Bread of Affliction: The Food Supply in the USSR during World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 179.

114. D'Ann R. Penner, "Stalin and the *Ital'ianka* of 1932–1933 in the Don Region," *Cahiers du Monde Russe* 39, nos. 1–2 (1998): 37.

115. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 70.

116. *Otkhod* means temporary work outside the village. *Izbas* means peasant houses.

117. Gao Wangling, "A Study of Chinese Peasant 'Counter-Action,'" 283–284.

118. Penner, "Stalin and the *Ital'ianka* of 1932–1933 in the Don Region," 28.

119. Stephen Wheatcroft and R. W. Davies, "The Crooked Mirror of Soviet Economic Statistics," in *The Economic Transformation of the Soviet Union, 1913–1945*, ed. R. W. Davies, Mark Harrison, and Stephen Wheatcroft (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 28.

120. For details, see Bernstein, "Stalinism, Famine, and Chinese Peasants," 350–351, and Li Rui, *Dayuejin qinliji*, 1:140–55.

121. For example, see Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Writings of Mao Zedong since the Establishment of the People's Republic of China] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1992), 8:110–122.

122. Tauger, "The 1932 Harvest and the Famine of 1933," 8.

123. Davies and Wheatcroft, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33," 627. Merl cites 5.06 million tons of grain exports in 1931, 1.73 million tons in 1932, and 1.68 million in 1933. Between 1932 and the Soviet-German treaty of 1940, the exports were marginal according to him. Stephan Merl, *Bauern unter Stalin: Die Formierung des sowjetischen Kolchossystems, 1930–1941* [Peasants under Stalin: The Formation of the Soviet Kolkhoz System] (Berlin: Dunker and Humblot, 1990), 56.

124. The territory of the Soviet Union in 1931 was smaller than that of the Russian empire in 1913.

125. Davies and Wheatcroft, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33," 627.

126. Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, 446.

127. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai*, 37.

128. Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan and Zhongyang dang'anguan, ed., *1958–1965: Zhonghua remin gongheguo jingji dang'an ziliao xuanbian, duiwai maoyi juan* [1958–1965: The Economic Archive of the People's Republic of China, Foreign Trade] (Beijing: Zhonghuo caizhengjingji chubanshe, 2011), 206.

129. Yang Dali, *Calamity and Reform in China: State, Rural Society, and Institutional Change since the Great Leap Famine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 66; Dikötter cites 4.2 million tons of exported grain in *Mao's Great Famine*, 83.

130. Dennis Tao Yang, "China's Agricultural Crisis and Famine of 1959–1961," 20.

131. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai*, 310.

132. Osokina, *Our Daily Bread*, 206. These rations were for "group 1," workers who were members of a consumer cooperative, and "group 2," those who did not belong to a cooperative.

133. The rations were usually issued on a monthly basis. I am using daily data to make comparisons easier.

134. Davies and Wheatcroft, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33," 627.

135. Yang Dali, *Calamity and Reform in China*, 66.

136. Thomas Bernstein, "Mao Zedong and the Famine of 1959–1960: A Study in Willfulness," *China Quarterly*, no. 186 (June 2006): 421–445.

137. Ibid., 412.

138. Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, 304.

139. Ó Gráda, "Great Leap into Famine," 195–196.

140. Frank Dikötter, "Response," *China Journal*, no. 66 (2011): 162.

141. Zhou Xun, ed., *The Great Famine in China: A Documentary History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), xiii.

142. Ibid., 23–25.

143. Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu jihuasi, ed., *Zhongguo nongcun jingji tongji daquan 1949–1986*, 410.

144. Qiao Peihua and Gao Quanyu, "Liushi niandai chu Liu Shaoqi dui Henan gongzuo de zhidao" [Working Instructions of Liu Shaoqi Regarding Henan at the Beginning of the 1960s], in *Liu Shaoqi jingji sixiang yanjiu*, ed. Song Baoding and Hu Wenlan (Zhengzhou: Jiuzhou chubanshe, 1998), 143.

145. Sun Wanguo (Warren Sun), "Mao Zedong de 'shouqiang maoyan' le ma? Zhiyi 'dajihuang' zuozhe Feng Ke (Frank Dikötter) de xueshu zaojia" [Mao Zedong's Smoking Gun? Questioning the Academic Counterfeit of Feng Ke (Frank Dikötter), the author of *The Great Famine*], unpublished paper, 2013; Anthony Garnaut, "Hard Facts and Half-Truths: The New Archival History of China's Great Leap Famine," *China Information* 27, no. 2 (2013): 235–238.

146. Mao Zedong, "Zai dishiwuci zui gao guowuhuiyi shang de jianghua" [The Fifteenth Speech of Mao Zedong at the Highest Conference on State Affairs], in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1992), 7:390.

147. Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, xv.

148. Josef Stalin, "Speech Delivered at the First All-Union Congress of the Collective-Farm Shock Brigades," in *Problems of Leninism* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1976), 657. Www.marx2mao.com/Stalin/CFSB33.html; accessed November 15, 2007.

149. Ellman, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33 Revisited," 676.

150. Ibid., 690.

151. Ellman, "The Role of Leadership Perceptions and of Intent in the Soviet Famine of 1931–1934," 824.

152. Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, 441.

153. Davies and Wheatcroft, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33," 633.

154. Ibid., 626.

155. R. W. Davies, M. B. Tauger, and Stephen G. Wheatcroft, "Stalin, Grain Stocks and the Famine of 1932–1933," *Slavic Review* 54, no. 3 (1995), 656; Robert

Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 329.

156. Davies and Wheatcroft, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33," 628.

157. Hiroaki Kuromiya, "The Soviet Famine of 1932–1933 Reconsidered," *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 4 (2008): 666.

158. Ibid., 667.

Chapter 2. Protecting the Cities, Fighting for Survival of the Regime

1. Barbara Falk, *Sowjetische Städte in der Hungersnot 1932/33: Staatliche Ernährungspolitik und städtisches Alltagsleben* [Soviet Cities during the Famine of 1932/33: Food Politics of the State and Urban Daily Life] (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2005), 26.

2. R. W. Davies, *Crisis and Progress in the Soviet Economy, 1931–1933 (The Industrialization of Soviet Russia 4)* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 177; R. W. Davies and Stephen G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931–1933* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 406.

3. For a good overview of the hierarchies in the Soviet rationing system, see Falk, *Sowjetische Städte in der Hungersnot 1932/33*, 229–306.

4. Elena Osokina, *Our Daily Bread: Socialist Distribution and the Art of Survival in Stalin's Russia, 1927–1941* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), 62.

5. Ibid., 66.

6. Davies, *Crisis and Progress in the Soviet Economy*, 177.

7. For the situation in labor camps, see, for example, Klaus Mühlhahn, "Hunger und staatliche Gewalt in der Volksrepublik China während der fünfziger und sechziger Jahre" [Hunger and State Violence in the People's Republic of China during the 1950s and 1960s], in *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierung unter dem Staatssozialismus* [Hunger, Nutrition and Rationing under State Socialism], ed. Matthias Middell and Felix Wemheuer (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2011), 299–327, and Lynne Viola, *The Lost World of Stalin's Special Settlements: The Unknown Gulag* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 132–150.

8. Osokina, *Our Daily Bread*, 83.

9. Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, 407.

10. Sheila Fitzpatrick, "The Great Departure: Rural-Urban Migration in the Soviet Union, 1929–33," in *Social Dimensions of Soviet Industrialization*, ed. William Rosenberg and Lewis Siegelbaum (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 31.

11. Luo Pinghan, *Da qian xi: 1961–1963 nian de chengzhen renkou jing jian* [The Great Migration: The Reduction of the Population of Cities and Towns in 1961–1963] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2003), 88–90.

12. David Shearer, *Policing Stalin's Socialism: Repression and Social Order in the Soviet Union, 1924–1953* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 193.

13. Ibid., 199.

14. On the Chinese system, see Sulamith Heins Potter, "The Position of Peasants in Modern China's Social Order," *Modern China* 9, no. 4 (1983): 465–499, and Tiejun Cheng, Mark Selden, and Timothy Cheek, "The Construction of Spatial

Hierarchies: China's *Hukou* and *Danwei* System," in *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China*, ed. Timothy Cheek and Tony van Saich (London: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 23–50.

15. Cheng, Selden, and Cheek, "The Construction of Spatial Hierarchies," 43.

16. Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, "The Distance between State and Rural Society in the PRC: Reading Document No. 1," *Journal of Environmental Management*, no. 87 (2008): 217.

17. Robert Kindler, "Auf der Flucht: Die kasachischen Nomaden und die Hungersnot von 1930–1934" [On the Run: The Kazakh Nomads and the Famine of 1930–1934], in Middell and Wemheuer, *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierungssysteme unter dem Staatssozialismus*, 43.

18. Quoted in R. W. Davies and Oleg Khlevniuk, eds., *The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence 1931–1936* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 138.

19. Cormac Ó Gráda, *Famine: A Short History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 54–55.

20. Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 176.

21. Robert Service, *Stalin: A Biography* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2005), 164–167.

22. Quoted in Lars Lih, Oleg Naumov, and Oleg Khlevniuk, eds., *Stalin's Letters to Molotov* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 175.

23. Stephen Wheatcroft, "Die sowjetische und chinesische Hungersnot in historischer Perspektive" [The Soviet and Chinese Famines in Historical Perspective], in Middell and Wemheuer, *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierungssysteme unter dem Staatssozialismus*, 94–95. For details on the urban famine, see also Mauricio Borrero, *Hungry Moscow: Scarcity and Urban Society in the Russian Civil War, 1917–1921* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), 35–81.

24. Lenin, *Gesammelte Werke* [Collected Works] (Berlin [East]: Dietz Verlag, 1963), 33:159.

25. Jin Chongji, *Mao Zedong zhuan, 1893–1949* [A Biography of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: Zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 2004), 306, and Mao Zedong, "On the Solution of the Grain Problem of the Masses," in *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings, 1912–1949*, vol. 4: *The Rise and Fall of the Chinese Soviet Republic, 1931–1934*, ed. Stuart Schram (London: M. E. Sharpe, 1997), 408–409.

26. Josef Stalin, "Industrialization and the Grain Problem," in *J. V. Stalin Collected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1954), 11:185.

27. Dennis Tao Yang, "China's Agricultural Crisis and Famine of 1959–1961: A Survey and Comparison to Soviet Famines," *Comparative Economic Studies*, no. 50 (2008): 24–25.

28. Hiroaki Kuromiya, "The Soviet Famine of 1932–1933 Reconsidered," *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 4 (2008): 670.

29. Davies and Khlevniuk, *The Stalin-Kaganovich Correspondence 1931–1936*, 109.

30. Conversation with Stephen Wheatcroft, University of Melbourne, June 2010.

31. Kuromiya, "The Soviet Famine of 1932–1933 Reconsidered," 670.

32. Hiroaki Kuromiya, "The Ukraine Famine of 1932–33 and Eurasian Politics," unpublished paper, 2010, 5. Published in Ukrainian: "Holodomor i evraziiska polytyka," *Ukraina moderna* 6, no. 17 (2010): 113–130.

33. Olga Velikanova has made the argument that the idea of the "fortress besieged" was paranoid. However, the Japanese occupation of Manchuria plays no important role in her essay. Olga Velikanova, *The Myth of the Besieged Fortress: Soviet Mass Perception in the 1920s–1930s* (Toronto: Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Toronto, 2002).

34. Mao Zedong, "Guanyu Taiwan jushi deng wenti fu Hu Zhiming de dianbao" [Reply to the Telegram of Ho Chi Minh Regarding the Situation of Taiwan and Other Problems], in *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Writings of Mao Zedong since the Establishment of the People's Republic of China], ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongguo wenxian chubanshe, 1992), 7:413.

35. Christian Gerlach, *Krieg, Ernährung, Völkermord: Deutsche Vernichtungspolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* [War, Nutrition, Genocide: The German Policies of Annihilation during World War II] (Zurich: Pendo, 2001), 17.

36. John Barber and Mark Harrison, "Patriotic War, 1941–1945," in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 3: *The Twentieth Century*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny (New York: Cambridge University Press 2006), 232.

37. Already in his first speech after the German invasion on July 3, 1941, Stalin warned that the goal of the Nazis would be to plunder Soviet soil and restore the rule of the landlords. The Soviet people would become the slaves of the German princes and barons. Josef Stalin, *Werke* [Works] (Dortmund: Roter Morgen Verlag, Nachdruck, 1976), 14:239. This rhetoric was quite different from the official theory of the Communist International (Comintern), which defined fascism as the "open dictatorship of the most reactionary elements of financial capital."

38. Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Stalin* (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2005), 172.

39. Arcadius Kahan, *Russian Economic History: The Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 109.

40. Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 56

41. Alexander De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 50.

42. The urban population in the Soviet Union increased from 22.3 million in 1926 (13.3 percent of the population) to 48.8 million in 1939 (25.3 percent) and 79.7 million in 1959 (38.2 percent). The population of Moscow increased from 2.05 million in 1926 to 4.5 million in 1939 and 6.03 million in 1959. Robert Lewis and Richard Rowland, "Urbanization in Russia and the USSR, 1897–1966," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 59, no. 4 (1969): 782, 790.

43. Kenneth Walker, *Food Grain Procurement and Consumption in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 155.

Epigraph to page 75: Mao Zedong, "Zai Zhongguo gongchandang dibajie quanguo daibiao dahui dierci huishan de jianghua" [Speech at the Second Meeting of the Eighth Party Congress Conference of the Communist Party of China], in *Mao Zedong Texte*, ed. Helmut Martin (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1982), 3:406.

Chapter 3. Hierarchies of Hunger and Peasant-State Relations (1949–1958)

1. Bian Yanjun and Wu Shaojing, eds., *Dong Biwu zhuan* [A Biography of Dong Biwu] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2006), 689.

2. James C. Scott: *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992). An early study on the Chinese case was conducted by David Zweig, "Struggling over Land in China: Peasant Resistance after Collectivization, 1966–1986," in *Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, ed. Forrest D. Colburn (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1989), 151–174. For an evaluation of Scott's argument, see Lucien Bianco, *Peasants without the Party: Grass-Roots Movements in Twentieth-Century China* (London: M. E. Sharpe, 2001), 257–273. Later studies include Li Huaiyin, "The First Encounter: Peasants' Resistance to State Control of Grain in East China in the Mid-1950s," *China Quarterly*, no. 185 (2006): 145–162, and Felix Wemheuer, "Die Waffen der Schwachen: Alltäglicher Widerstand der chinesischen Bauern in der Ära der kollektiven Landwirtschaft (1953–1982)" [The Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Resistance of the Chinese Peasants during the Era of Collectivization (1953–1982)], *Jahrbuch für Historische Kommunismusforschung* [Yearbook for Historical Communist Studies] (2007): 11–31.

3. Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

4. Gao Wangling, *Renmin gongshe shiqi Zhongguo nongmin fan xingwei diaocha* [Investigation of Everyday Forms of Resistance of the Chinese Peasants in the Era of the People's Communes] (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2006); Gao Wangling, "A Study of Chinese Peasant 'Counter-Action,'" in *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China's Great Leap Forward and Famine*, ed. Kimberley Manning and Felix Wemheuer (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 274–278; Ralph Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China: Mao's Great Leap Forward Famine and the Origins of Righteous Resistance in Da Fo Village* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

5. Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China*, 158, 226–228.

6. Chen Yixin, "When Food Became Scarce: Life and Death in Chinese Villages during the Great Leap Foward," *Journal of the Historical Society*, no. 2 (2010): 122.

7. For example, see "Fangzhi 'kenqing' jieyue liangshi" [Prevent "Eating Green," Save Grain], *RMRB September 2*, 1952.

8. Jean Chun Oi, *State and Peasants in Contemporary China: The Political Economy of Village Government* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 229.

9. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

10. Frank Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958–1962* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010. For more details, see Felix Wemheuer, "Sites of Horror: Mao's Great Famine," *China Journal*, no. 66 (2011): 158–159.

11. Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, xv.

12. Gao Wangling, "A Study of Chinese Peasant 'Counter-Action,'" 287.

13. Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, 231.

14. Mark B. Tauger, "Soviet Peasants and Collectivization, 1930–39: Resistance and Adaptation," in *Rural Adaptation in Russia*, ed. Stephen K. Wegren (London: Routledge, 2005), 66–68.

15. Peter Fritzsche, "On the Subjects of Resistance," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 1 (2000): 150.

16. Lynne Viola, "Popular Resistance in the Stalinist 1930s: Soliloquy of a Devil's Advocate," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 1 (2000): 51.

17. "Eating green" is mentioned in "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu yadi nongcun he chengshi de kouliang biaozhun de zhishi" [Instruction of the Central Committee of the CCP Regarding the Cutback of Rations Standards in the Countryside and Cities], in *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), 13:565.

18. Conversation with Gao Wangling, Beijing, July 2009.

19. In May 1918 Lenin already argued the following in a letter to the workers of Petrograd: "The famine is not due to the fact that there is no grain in Russia, but to the fact that the bourgeoisie and the rich generally are putting up a last decisive fight against the rule of the toilers, against the state of the workers, against Soviet power, on this most important and acute of issues, the issue of bread. The bourgeoisie and the rich generally, including the rural rich, the kulaks, are thwarting the grain monopoly; they are disrupting the distribution of grain undertaken by the state for the purpose and in the interests of supplying bread to the whole of the population, and in the first place to the workers, the toilers, the needy." W. I. Lenin, "On the Famine: A Letter to the Workers of Petrograd" (1918); http://marx.org/archive/lenin/works/1918/may/22b.htm; accessed June 20, 2007.

20. Lars T. Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia, 1914–1921* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 138–159.

21. Quoted in Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin's Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 75.

22. Michael Ellman, "The Role of Leadership Perceptions and of Intent in the Soviet Famine of 1931–1934," *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, no. 6 (2005): 830.

23. R. W. Davies and Stephen Wheatcroft, "Stalin and the Soviet Famine of 1932–33: A Reply to Ellman," *Europe-Asia Studies* 58, no. 4 (2006): 631.

24. R. W. Davies and Stephen G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931–1933* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 217.

25. James C. Scott, "Everyday Forms of Resistance," in Colburn, *Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, 20–21.

26. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, ed., *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao* [Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China] (Baoding: Hebei sheng gongxiaoshe Baoding yinshuachang yinshua, 1989), 2 vols.

27. "Renmin zhengfu guanyu kangzai jiuzai de fangzhen zhengce, zhengwuyuan guanyu shengchang jiuzai de zhishi" [The Policy Guidelines of the People's Gov-

ernment Regarding Defense against Natural Disaster and Relief, Instruction of the Institute of Government Affairs Regarding Production to Relieve Disaster], in *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jingji dang'an ziliao xuanbian 1949–1952, nongye juan* [Economic Archives of the People's Republic of China 1949–1952, Agriculture], ed. Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 1993), 54–55.

28. "Zhongyang zhengfu neiwubu guanyu shengchan jiuzai de bocong zhishi" [Additional Instruction of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of the Central Government Regarding Production and Disaster Relief], in Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jingji dang'an ziliao xuanbian 1949–1952, nongye juan*, 60. See also "Wo guo jiuzai gongzuo weida de chengji" [The Great Achievements of Famine Relief in Our Country], *RMRR*, July 17, 1957

29. Bian Yanjun and Wu Shaojing, *Dong Biwu zhuan*, 689.

30. Quoted in ibid., 689.

31. Bian Yanjun and Zhang Wenhe, eds., *Li Xiannian zhuan, 1949–1992* [A Biography of Li Xiannian] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2009), 1:62.

32. Bian Yanjun and Wu Shaojing, *Dong Biwu zhuan*, 691.

33. Dong Biwu, "Guanyu shenru kazhan shengchan jiuzai gongzuo de baogao" [Report Regarding the Thorough Development of Production and Disaster Relief Work], in Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jingji dang'an ziliao xuanbian 1949–1952, nongye juan*, 78.

34. Ibid., 86.

35. Documents were issued in 1950, 1951, 1953, 1954, 1955, and 1957. See Zhonghua renmin gongheguo minzhengbu dashiji jibianwei, ed., *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo minzhengbu dashiji* [Important Events of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui chubanshe, 2004), 14, 20, 40, 50, 63, 84.

36. This is what I found from a search in the electronic database of the newspaper.

37. For a detailed description of the distribution of grain in the countryside in the 1970s, see Oi, *State and Peasant in Contemporary China*, 13–66.

38. For regional differences and grain transfers, see Kenneth Walker, *Food Grain Procurement and Consumption in China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 1–41.

39. Robert Ash, ed., *Agricultural Development in China, 1949–1989: The Collected Papers of Kenneth Walker (1931–1989)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 213.

40. For example, see the statistics provided by the minister of grain: "Chen Guodong guanyu 1959 dao 1960 niandu liangshi fenpei he liangshi shouzhi jihua tiaozheng yijian de baogao" [Reports on the Opinion of Chen Guodong Regarding the Adjustment of the Plan Balance and Distribution of Grain in 1959–1960], in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 12:472. I thank Chen Yixin for drawing my attention to this source.

41. Wu Chengming and Dong Zhikai, eds., *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jingjishi, di yi juan, 1949–1952* [The Economic History of the People's Republic of China, vol. 1: 1949–1952] (Beijing: Zhongguo caizheng jingji chubanshe, 2001), 920.

42. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai: Tonggou tongxiao shi* [The Decades of the Cards: A History of the United Purchase and Sales System] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2008), 7.

43. Wu Chengming and Dong Zhikai, *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jingjishi*, 921.

44. Ibid., 937.

45. Mao Zedong, "Liangshi tonggou tongxiao wenti" [The Problem of the United Purchase and Sale of Grain], *Mao Zedong Wenji* [Selected Works of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999), 6:296–297.

46. For example, see "Nongminmen! Yongyue di ba liangshi mai gei guojia, bangzhu guojia jianshe" [Peasants! Enthusiastically Sell the Grain to the State, Help the State's Construction], *RMRB*, November 20, 1953.

47. After collectivization, "surplus" would mean the amount of grain minus the share for the collective team and individuals, seed grain, and animal fodder. "Surplus" did not necessarily mean that the amount that was left would satisfy the basic needs of the peasants. "Consequently, the 'surplus' was nothing more than an artifact of state regulation and manipulation in the apportionment of the basic shares of harvest. The existence of a 'surplus' served to legitimate the notion that the state was only asking the peasants to sell their 'excess' grain which remained after their own needs had been provided for." Jean Oi, "State and Peasant in Contemporary China: The Politics of Grain Procurement," PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1983, 134–135.

48. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai*, 124.

49. Ibid., 131.

50. Mao Zedong, *Ausgewählte Werke* [Selected Works] (Beijing: Verlag für Fremdsprachige Literatur, 1977), 5:464.

51. Yu Xianlin, "Jiaoyu nongmin zhuyi jieyue liangshi" [Educate the Peasants to Pay Attention to the Saving of Grain], *RMRB*, November 5, 1953.

52. Chen Zhao, "Jiaoyu nongmin jieyue liangshi" [Educate the Peasants to Save Grain], *RMRB*, September 6, 1956.

53. "Fangzhi 'kenqing' jieyue liangshi" [Prevent "Eating Green," Save Grain], *RMRB*, September 2, 1952.

54. For example, see "Guodu chunhuang, shen fang xiahuang" [Pass Spring Shortage, Cautious Guard against Summer Shortage], *RMRB*, May 29, 1950, and "Quanli lingdao xiashou xiabo" [Fully Lead the Summer Harvest and Sow], *RMRB*, June 2, 1950.

55. "Chiqing yumi he maodou shi langfei liangshi de xingwei" [Eating Green Maize and Soy Beans Is Wasting Grain], *RMRB*, August 12, 1955.

56. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai*, 222.

57. "Shijiazhuang shi shi zenme yang kaizhan jieyue liangshi yundong de" [How the City of Shijiazhuang Developed a Campaign to Save Grain], *RMRB*, July 13, 1955.

58. "Renren dou yao jieyue liangshi" [Everybody Should Save Grain], *RMRB*, March 21, 1955.

59. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai*, 234.

60. The rations were usually issued on a monthly basis. I am using daily data to make comparisons easier.

61. "Shizhen liangshi dingliang gongying zanxing banfa" [Provisional Method for the Distribution of Grain Rations in Cities and Towns], in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 7:116.

62. Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu jihuasi, ed., *Zhongguo nongcun jingji tongji daquan 1949–1986*, 578.

63. For example, see *Funü Zazhi* 17 (1958): 33.

64. Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongda juece yu shijian de huigu* [Reflections on Certain Major Decisions and Events] (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1991], 1:372.

65. Yang Weilin, "Jiangsu sheng liangshi tongxiao jiben qingkuang de diaocha fenxi" [An Investigation and Analysis of the General Situation of Unified Grain Sales in Jiangsu Province], *RMRB*, June 26, 1955.

66. For a similar critique of local cadres, see "Tiaoji he baozheng nongmin de kouliang" [Balance and Guarantee the Rations of the Peasants], *RMRB*, March 31, 1957.

67. "Jueding wo guo liangshi wenti de fangzhen" [Deciding the Directions to Solve the Grain Problem of Our Country], *RMRB*, July 22, 1955.

68. In the context of the Three-Fix Policy, some provincial governments set lower and upper limits for the rations, with local variations. For example, in Shanxi Province in 1955, the provincial government even defined the minimum rations for some regions below 500 grams per day. Hou Xingui, *Shanxi liangshi sishinian* [Forty Years of Grain in Shanxi] (Taiyuan: Shanxi Jingji chubanshe, 1992), 20.

69. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao*, 1:215.

70. "Chen Guodong guanyu 1959 dao 1960 niandu liangshi fenpei he liangshi shouzhi jihua tiaozheng yijian de baogao," in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 12:472.

71. Li Xiannian, "Liangshi wenti bu ke diaoyi qingxin" [The Grain Problem Cannot Be Treated Lightly], in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 10:109.

72. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao*, 1:244–245.

73. Ibid., 251.

74. For more about this campaign, see Felix Wemheuer, "'The Grain Problem Is an Ideological Problem': Discourses of Hunger in the 1957 Socialist Education Campaign," in Manning and Wemheuer, *Eating Bitterness*, 108–113.

75. *NBCK*, January 3, 1957, 39.

76. *RMRB*, August 10, 1957.

77. Ibid., August 5, 1957.

78. *NBCK*, September 13, 1957, 4.

79. Ibid.

80. *Liangshi* [Grain], no. 7, 1957, 2.

81. Ibid., no. 11, 1957, 4.

82. *Shandong tonggoutongxiao shouce* [Shangdong's Handbook for the State Monopoly for Purchase and Marketing] (Ji'nan: Shandong sheng liangshiting, 1957), 38.

83. Ibid., 46.

84. *Liangshi*, no. 7, 1957, 4.
85. Ibid., no. 9, 1957, 4.
86. "Wo guo jiuzai gongzuo de weida chengji" [The Great Achievements of Relief Work in My Country], *RMRB*, July 17, 1957.
87. See *NBCK*, June 17, 1957.
88. Ibid., June 19, 1957, 9.
89. Ibid., 12.
90. Ibid., June 22, 1957, 3.
91. Ibid., 5.
92. Ibid., September 17, 1957, 9.
93. Ibid., 14.
94. Ibid., 10.
95. Ibid., September 16, 1957, 8.
96. Ibid., 10.
97. Ibid., 11.
98. *Bayi Zazhi*, June 24, 1957, 49.
99. Justin Yifu Lin and Dennis Tao Yang, "On the Causes of China's Agricultural Crisis and the Great Leap Famine," *China Economic Review* 9, no. 2 (1998): 125–140.
100. Sun Dongfang, "Dui 1957 nongcun shehuizhuyi jiaoyu yundong de lishi kaocha" [Historical Investigation of the Rural Socialist Education Campaign in 1957], *Beijing Dangshi, no. 1* (2006): 11.
101. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao*, 1:295.
102. Frederick Teiwes and Warren Sun, *China's Road to Disaster: Mao, Central Politicians, and Provincial Leaders in the Unfolding of the Great Leap Forward, 1955–1959* (London: M. E. Sharpe, 1999), 54–55.
103. Chen Yun, *Wenji* [Selected Works] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2005), 3:188.
104. Wu Ren, *Renmingongshe he gongchangzhuyi* [The People's Communes and Communism] (Beijing: Gongren chubanshe, 1958), 19.
105. *Hongqi Zazhi*, no. 10 (October 16, 1958): 5.
106. Cui Naifu, *Dangdai Zhongguo de minzheng* [Civil Affairs in Contemporary China] (Beijing: Zhongguo dangdai chubanshe, 1994), 28–29.
107. *RMRB*, September 29, 1958.
108. Wu Zhipu, "Lun renmin gongshe" [On the People's Communes], *Xuanchuan Jianbao*, August 25, 1958.
109. Quoted in Luo Pinghan, *Daguofan: Gonggongshitang shimo* [Eating out of the Big Pot: The History of the Public Dining Halls] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2001), 56.
110. *Hongqi*, no. 7 (September 1, 1958): 22.
111. Wen and Chang have argued that waste and overconsumption contributed to the famine. See Guanzhong James Wen and Gene Chang, "Communal Dining and the Chinese Famine of 1958–1961," *Economic and Cultural Change*, no. 46 (1997): 2–34. For an alternative view, see Lin and Yang, "On the Causes of China's Agricultural Crisis and the Great Leap Famine," 125–140.

112. *RMRB*, September 3, 1958, 3.
113. *Hongqi*, no. 7 (September 1, 1958): 23.

Chapter 4. Preventing Urban Famine by Starving the Countryside (1959–1962)

1. "Zhonggong zhongyang dui Shandong shengwei, shengfu guanyu Guantao xian tinghuo, taohuang wenti de jiancha baogao de pingyu" [Comment of the Central Committee of the CCP on the Investigative Report of the Party Provincial Committee and Government of Shandong Regarding the Stoppage of Food Distribution and Escape from Famine in Guantao County] (January 22, 1959), in *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1996), 12:19.
2. *NBCK*, January 31, 1959, 10.
3. Ibid., 12–14.
4. Ibid., 6.
5. Ibid., January 30, 1959, 20.
6. Ibid., February 2, 1959, 3–5.
7. Ibid., February 5, 1959, 3–4.
8. Mao Zedong, "Zai Zhengzhou huiyi shang de jianghua" [Speech on the Zhengzhou Conference] in *Mao Zedong Wenji* [Selected Works of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1999), 8:9–10.
9. Qiao Peihua and Gao Quanyu, "Liushi niandai chu Liu Shaoqi dui Henan gongzuo de zhidao" [Working Instructions of Liu Shaoqi Regarding Henan at the Beginning of the 1960s], in *Liu Shaoqi jingji sixiang yanjiu*, ed. Song Baoding and Hu Wenlan (Zhengzhou: Jiuzhou chubanshe, 1998), 143.
10. Mao Zedong, "Guanyu chunhuang queliang wenti de pingyu" [Comment Regarding the Problem of the Lack of Grain during the Spring Shortage], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 12:185.
11. She Dehong, "Guanyu 'Xinyang shijian' de yishu" [Memories of the 'Xinyang Incident'], in *Zhongguo nongcun yanjiu 2002 juan*, ed. Zhongguo nongcun yanjiu bianji weiyuanhui (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2003), 327.
12. Yang Jisheng, *Mubei: Zhongguo liushi niandai dajihuang jishi* [Tombstone: A Record of the Chinese Famine in the Sixties] (Hong Kong: Tiandi, 2008), 1:37. For another example, see Qiao Peihua, *Xinyang shijian* [The Xinyang Disaster] (Hong Kong: Kaifang chubanshe, 2009), 92–102.
13. Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*, 2:854; Liang Zhiyuan, "Fan xian tonggou tongxiao fan youqing de yanzhong houguo" [The Serious Result of Struggle against Rightist Opportunists in the Context of the Unified Purchase and Sales in Fan County], *Yanhuang chunqiu*, no. 7 (2003): 25–27.
14. Ralph Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China: Mao's Great Leap Forward Famine and the Origins of Righteous Resistance in Da Fo Village* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 51–88.
15. For an overview, see Gao Wangling, "A Study of Chinese Peasant 'Counter-Action,'" in *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China's Great Leap Forward*

and Famine, ed. Kimberley Manning and Felix Wemheuer (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 279–280.

16. Some exceptions are Jeremy Brown, "Great Leap City: Surviving the Famine in Tianjin," in Manning and Wemheuer, *Eating Bitterness*, 226–250; Frank Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958–1962* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), 230–241; and Luo Pinghan, *Da qian xi: 1961–1963 nian de chengzhen renkou jing jian* [The Great Migration: The Reduction of the Population of Cities and Towns in 1961–1963] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2003), 81–118.

17. Quoted in Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, ed., *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao* [Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China] (Baoding: Hebei sheng gongxiaoshe Baoding yinshuachang yinshua, 1989), 1:300.

18. In a letter to Mao Zedong in September 1961, Li Xiannian mentioned the same responsibilities. He wrote that the central government would be responsible for the grain supply of Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Liaoning, with an urban population of 24 million, and the provincial governments, for an urban population of 110 million. Li Xiannian, "Jiu liangshi wenti gei Mao Zedong de xin" [A Letter to Mao Zedong Regarding the Grain Problem], *Wenxuan, 1935–1988* [Collected Works] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1989), 260.

19. Luo Pinghan, *Da qian xi*, 132, 88–89.

20. Chen Yun, *Wenji* [Selected Works] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2005), 3:275.

21. Luo Pinghan, *Da qian xi*, 41

22. "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan guojiajihua weiyuanhui dangzu, laodongbu dangzu 'Guanyu 1958 nian gongzi de jiben qingkuang he 1959 nian laodong gongzi de anpai yijian de baogao'" [The Central Committee Approves for Distribution the Report of the Party Leadership Group of the State Planning Committee and the Ministry of Labor Regarding the General Situation of Work Wages in 1958 and the Suggestions to Organize Work Wages in 1959] (May 27, 1959), in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 12:357.

23. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao*, 1:303.

24. Chen Guolin, "Zhou Enlai yu liangshi gongzuo" [Zhou Enlai and Grain Work], in *Huainian Zhou Enlai*, ed. "Huainian Zhou Enlai" bianjizu (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1986), 77.

25. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zai dazhong chengshi jiaoqu fazhan fushipin shengchan de zhishi" [Instruction of the Central Committee Regarding the Development of Non-Staple Food Production in the Suburbs of the Big and Middle Cities] (July 4, 1959), in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 12:426.

26. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai: Tonggou tongxiao shi* [The Decades of the Cards: A History of the United Purchase and Sales System] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2008), 280. The figures quoted here were published much later.

27. "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan Li Xiannian guanyu liji tuji diaoyun liang you mian he chengli diaoyun zhihuibu de baogao" [Comment of the Central Com-

mittee on the Report of Li Xiannian Regarding the Founding of Command Headquarters for the Transfer of Grain and the Immediate Concentration of All Efforts to Transfer Grain, Oil, and Cotton], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 13:30.

28. "Guanyu jiji diaoyun liangshi de ji xiang cuoshi de gaobao" [Report Regarding Several Measures for the Urgent Transfer of Grain], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 13:304.

29. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu zuo hao liangshi fenpei gongzuo de zhishi" [Instruction of the Central Committee of the CCP Regarding Carrying Out the Work of Distributing Grain Well], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 13:398.

30. Jin Chongji, ed., *Zhou Enlai zhuan* [A Biography of Zhou Enlai] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1998), 4:1558–1559.

31. Ibid., 1560–1561.

32. Yang Shaoqiao and Zhao Fasheng, "Zhou Enlai yu woguo de liangshi gongzuo" [Zhou Enlai and the Grain Work in My Country], in *Bu jin de sinian*, ed. Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1987), 232.

33. Fang Liubi, "Zhou Enlai zai guominjingji tiaozheng shiqi wei liangshi gongzuo xinqin caolao" [The Hard-Working Zhou Enlai and Grain Work in the Period of Adjustment of the National Economy], in "Huianian Zhou Enlai" bianjizu, *Huainian Zhou Enlai*, 83.

34. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu liji zhuajin liangshi diaoyun de tongzhi" [Circular of the Central Committee of the CCP Regarding Keeping a Firm Grasp on the Immediate Transfer of Grain], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 13:702–703.

35. Zhao Fazheng, *Dangdai Zhongguo de liangshi gongzuo* [Grain Work in Modern China] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1988), 269.

36. Ibid., 257.

37. She Dehong, "Guanyu 'Xinyang shijian' de yishu," 333.

38. Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*, 2:855.

39. Ibid., 858.

40. MacFarquhar gives higher numbers. According to him there were 5.05 million tons in stock in the winter of 1960–1961, compared to 18.2 million tons in 1957. Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution, 3: The Coming of the Cataclysm, 1961–1966* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 22.

41. Zhao Fazheng, *Dangdai Zhongguo de liangshi gongzuo*, 107.

42. As discussed in Jung Chang and Jon Halliday, *Mao: The Unknown Story* (New York: Anchor Books, 2006), 385–396.

43. Mao Zedong, "Liangshi wenti" [The Grain Problem], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 12:438.

44. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu quan dang dongshou daban nongye, daban liangshi de zhishi" [Instruction of the Central Committee of the CCP That the Whole Party Should Start to Manage Agriculture and Grain in a Big Way], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 13:520.

45. Regarding food substitutes, see Gao Hua, "Food Augmentation Methods and Food Substitutes during the Great Famine," in Manning and Wemheuer, *Eating Bitterness*, 182–194.

46. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu yadi nongcun he chengshi de kouliang biaozhun de zhishi" [Instruction of the Central Committee of the CCP Regarding the Cutback of Rations Standards in the Countryside and Cities], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 13:565.

47. Ibid., 567–568.

48. Cao Shuji, "Grain and Politics in the Era of the Great Famine," paper presented at the workshop on "Famine in Russia and China," University of Melbourne, June 2010.

49. Zhou Feizhou, "'Sannian ziran zaihai' shiqi woguo shengji zhengfu dui zaihuang de fanyin he jiuzhu yanjiu" [Research on Famine Relief and the Response of the Provincial Governments of My Country to the Famine in the "Period of the Three Difficult Years"], *Shehuixue yanjiu*, 2003; http://www.usc.cuhk.edu.hk/wkgb.asp; accessed May 17, 2010.

50. *NBCK*, January 13, 1961, 13.

51. Ibid., April 18, 1961, 7.

52. Regarding the role of Xushui as a national model, see, for example, Li Rui, *Dayuejin qinliji* [Personal Account of the Great Leap Forward] (Haikou: Nanfang chubanshe, 1999), 2:19–39.

53. *NBCK*, September 26, 1960, 8.

54. Ibid., October 5, 1960, 8–9.

55. For example, see the decisions of the central government on December 18, 1958; January 5, 1959; and February 4, 1959, in Luo Pinghan, *Da xian qi*, 40–43. In November 1960, the cities were instructed to set up stations for the deportation *(qiansongzhan)* of the "floating population." The Bureaus for Civil Affairs of cities were instructed that the organization of deportation had to be the focus of their work in the following months. Cui Naifu, *Dangdai Zhongguo de minzheng* [Civil Affairs in Contemporary China] (Beijing: Zhongguo dangdai chubanshe, 1994), 35.

56. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu liji kaizhan daguimo caiji he zhizhao daishipin yundong de jinji zhishi" [Urgent Instruction of the Central Committee of the CCP Regarding the Immediate Start of the Campaign to Collect and Manufacture Food Substitutes on a Large Scale], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 13:687.

57. Gao Hua, "Food Augmentation Methods and Food Substitutes during the Great Famine," 188.

58. *NBCK*, January 13, 1961, 4.

59. Ibid., January 9, 1961, 7.

60. Ibid., January 19, 1961, 16.

61. Ibid., January 25, 1961, 15.

62. Luo Pinghan, *Da qian xi*, 96–97.

63. Zhang Taiyuan, "1956–1978 nian Beijing jumin jiating de shipin xiaofei shenghuo" [The Lives and Foodstuff Consumption of the Resident Families of Beijing 1956–1978], *Dangdai Zhongguo lishi yanjiu* 8, no. 3 (2001): 107.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid., 110.

66. Bian Yanjun and Zhang Wenhe, eds., *Li Xiannian zhuan, 1949–1992* [A Biography of Li Xiannian] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2009), 1:500.

67. Ibid., 501.

68. Felix Wemheuer, *Chinas "Großer Sprung nach vorne" (1958–1961): Von der kommunistischen Offensive in die Hungersnot—Intellektuelle erinnern sich* [China's "Great Leap Forward" (1958–1961): From the Communist Offensive to Famine—Intellectuals Remember] (Münster: Lit-Verlag, 2004), 80.

69. *NBCK*, February 2, 1962, 7.

70. Jin Chongji, *Zhou Enlai zhuan*, 4:1604–1605.

71. Yang Jisheng, *Mubei*, 2:943–953.

72. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu yadi nongcun he chengshi de kouliang biaozhun de zhishi" [Instruction of the Central Committee of the CCP Regarding the Cutback of Rations Standards in the Countryside and Cities], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 13: 568–569.

73. Regarding corruption, see Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China*, 232–246, and Felix Wemheuer, *Steinnudeln: Ländliche Erinnerungen und staatliche Vergangenheitsbewältigung der "Groβen Sprung"-Hungersnot in der chinesischen Provinz Henan* [Stone Noodles: Rural and Official Memory of the Great Leap Famine in the Chinese Province of Henan] (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2007), 183–186.

74. Jin Chongji and Chen Qun, *Chen Yun zhuan* [A Biography of Chen Yun] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2005), 1257.

75. For example, see Manning and Wemheuer, "Introduction," in Manning and Wemheuer, *Eating Bitterness*, 20–21.

76. Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China*, 256.

77. *NBCK*, July 20, 1961, 6.

78. Ibid., January 10, 1961, 6.

79. Ibid., January 25, 1961, 13.

80. Ibid., January 10, 1961, 14.

81. For example, see ibid., January 14, 1962, 5–7.

82. For example, see ibid., July 24, 1961, 6–7.

83. Ibid., June 12, 1961, 7.

84. Thaxton also made this argument in "How the Great Leap Forward Famine Ended in Rural China: 'Administrative Intervention' versus Peasant Resistance," in Manning and Wemheuer, *Eating Bitterness*, 267–268.

85. Feng Xianzhi and Jin Chongji, eds., *Mao Zedong zhuan, 1949–1976* [A Biography of Mao Zedong] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2003), 2:1068.

86. Thomas Bernstein, "Mao Zedong and the Famine of 1959–1960: A Study in Willfulness," *China Quarterly*, no. 186 (June 2006): 443.

87. For the two chapters on the adjustment of the crisis, see Feng Xianzhi and Jin Chongji, *Mao Zedong zhuan, 1949–1976*, 2:1100–1176. Many instructions on the reform of the ownership structure of the People's Communes can be found between November 1960 and November 1961 in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Writings of Mao Zedong since the Establishment of the People's Republic of China] (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1996), 9:61–79, 96–97, 110–112.

88. The new People's Communes were much smaller. The brigade became the principal owner of the means of production, and the team became the most important unit for the organization of production and everyday life. Plots for private use were restored.

89. For example, see Xin Yi, *Nongcun renmingongshe fenpei zhidu yanjiu* [Research on the Distribution System of the Rural People's Communes] (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2005); Luo Pinghan, *Gongshe! Gongshe! Nongcun renmingongshe* [Communes! Communes! The Rural People's Communes] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2003); Luo Pinghan, *Daguofan: Gonggongshitang shimo* [Eating out of the Big Pot: The History of the Public Dining Halls] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2001).

90. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai*, 280.

91. Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongda juece yu shijian de huigu* [Reflections on Certain Major Decisions and Events] (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1991), 2:1078.

92. MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 3:225.

93. Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongda juece yu shijian de huigu*, 2:1078. Mao's secretary, Tian Jiaying, estimated that around 30 percent of the peasants practiced similar systems. MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 3:266.

94. Bo Yibo, *Ruogan zhongda juece yu shijian de huigu*, 2:1080.

95. Terry Sicular, "Grain Pricing: A Key Link in Chinese Economic Policy," *Modern China* 14, no. 4 (1988): 461.

96. Feng Xianzhi and Jin Chongji, *Mao Zedong zhuan, 1949–1976*, 2:1103.

97. Sicular, "Grain Pricing," 475.

98. Li Xiannian, "Jiu liangshi wenti gei Mao Zedong de xin," 259.

99. Quoted in Jin Chongji and Chen Qun, *Chen Yun zhuan*, 1226.

100. Ibid., 1226.

101. For more details, see MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution*, 3:23–30.

102. Bian Yanjun and Zhang Wenhe, *Li Xiannian zhuan, 1949–1992*, 1:483.

103. Yang Dali, *Calamity and Reform in China: State, Rural Society, and Institutional Change since the Great Leap Famine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 108.

104. Shang Changfeng, "1961 nian liangshi jinkou dui Zhongguo duiwai maoyi de yingxiang" [The Impact of the Grain Imports of 1961 on Chinese Foreign Trade] unpublished paper, 2010.

105. Luo Pinghan, *Da qian xi*, 118.

106. Sicular, "Grain Pricing," 460.

107. Only very little research has been done on the "send-down" of 1961–1963. For example, see Luo Pinghan, *Da qian xi*, and Brown, "Great Leap City," 242–246.

108. Quoted in Jin Chongji, *Zhou Enlai zhuan*, 4:1565.

109. Chen Yun, "Dongyuan chengshi renkou xiaxiang" [Mobilize the Urban Population to Go Down to the Countryside], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 14:374.

110. "Zhongyang gongzuo huiyi guanyu jianshao chengzhen renkou he yasuo chengzhen liangshi xiaoliang de jiu tao banfa" [Working Conference of the Central

Committee Regarding Nine Methods to Reduce the Population of the Cities and Towns and Grain Sales], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 14:412.

111. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao*, 1:314.

112. See Li Xiannian, "Jiu liangshi wenti gei Mao Zedong de xin," 262.

113. The Chinese scholar Xin Yi argues that the famine was a product of the system of unified purchasing and sales that established the priority of feeding the urban population. This argument differs from the Chinese mainstream view that considers the famine a result of "leftist" policies. See He Ling and Xin Yi, "Zhengce pianxiang yu 1959–1961 nian nongcun jihuang" [Political Tendencies and the Rural Famine of 1959–1961], in *Dayuejin–Dajihuang*, ed. Song Yongyi and Ding Shu (Xianggang: Tianyuan shucheng, 2009), 1:502–503.

114. Luo Pinghan, *Piaozheng niandai*, 303.

115. Thaxton, "How the Great Leap Forward Famine Ended in Rural China," 267–268.

116. Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 7.

117. Cormac Ó Gráda, *Famine: A Short History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 23.

118. Sen, *Poverty and Famines*, 2.

119. Sen's entitlement approach has been criticized by many. Ó Gráda, whose scholarly expertise focuses on the great Irish famine, and Tauger, who specializes in Soviet history, both have questioned whether the Bengal famine, the case upon which Sen's argument most heavily rests, could be explained by entitlement failure alone because a serious decline in available food actually did take place (Mark B. Tauger, "Entitlement, Shortage and the 1943 Bengal Famine: Another Look," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 31, no. 1 [2003]: 68–69). Ó Gráda argues that the claim of the British colonial administration that there was enough food for everybody in Bengal served as an excuse for the refusal to send relief. According to him, the decrease in production and increase in prices were factors, but of overwhelming importance were the British priorities of using the entire imperial infrastructure to win the war against Nazi Germany and to mitigate an actual food deficit in Britain (Ó Gráda, *Famine*, 188–191). Recent research on the famines in Bangladesh and Ethiopia in the 1970s have shown that it is too early to dismiss entirely a decline in available food as a factor in famines of the twentieth century (Ó Gráda, *Famine*, 192). Sen cited these two famines as further examples of entitlement failure.

120. Amartya Sen, "Food, Economy and Entitlements," in *The Political Economy of Hunger*, ed. Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 1:35.

121. Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 264–265.

122. Stephen Devereux, "Sen's Entitlement Approach: Critiques and Counter-Critiques," *Oxford Development Studies* 29, no. 3 (2001): 257.

123. Peter Nolan, "The Causation and Prevention of Famines: A Critique of A. K. Sen," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 21, no. 1 (1993): 2.

124. Devereux, "Sen's Entitlement Approach," 248–249.

125. He Ling and Xin Yi, "Zhengce pianxiang yu 1959–1961 nian nongcun jihuang," 502–503.

126. Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention*, 332.

127. Nolan, "The Causation and Prevention of Famines," 11.

128. At the time of writing his critique of Sen's analysis, Nolan was no supporter of Socialist planned economies, although he argues that the market could provide information to governments even in the absence of democracy and a Western-style free press.

129. In Thaxton's explanation of the famine in Da Fo Village, a "lumpen leadership" of former militia leaders plays an important role. Mao used these forces to dismantle the system of private household proprietorship. Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention*, 328–330.

130. Thaxton argues that peasants had difficulties surviving in the period after the public dining halls were abolished and before the first harvest on their private plots. During that time, they did in fact rely for survival primarily on the strategy of "eating green." Ibid., 222.

Epigraph to page 155: W. Allyn Rickett, ed. and trans., *Guanzi: Political, Economic, and Philosophical Essays from Early China*, vol. 1 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 229.

Chapter 5. The Burden of Empire

1. Albrecht Martiny, "Nationalitäten und Nationalitätenpolitik" [Nationalities and Nationality Policies], in *Handbuch der Geschichte Russlands*, vol. 3: *1856–1945: Von den autokratischen Reformen zum Sowjetstaat*, part 2, ed. Gottfried Schramm (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1992), 1772; Lu Yu, ed., *Xin Zhongguo renkou wushinian* [50 Years' Population of New China] (Beijing: Zhongguo renkou chubanshe, 2004), 2:769.

2. Peter C. Perdue, "Erasing the Empire, Re-Racing the Nation: Racialism and Culturalism in Imperial China," in *Imperial Formations*, ed. Ann Laura Stoler, Carole McGranahan, and Peter C. Perdue (Santa Fe, NM: New SAR Press, 2007), 141.

3. A good overview for the Russian case is Ronald G. Suny, "The Empire Strikes Out: Imperial Russia, National Identity, and Theories of Empire," in *A State of Nations: Empire and Nation-Making in the Age of Lenin and Stalin*, ed. Ronald G. Suny and Terry Martin, 23–66 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen, eds., *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997). For China see Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, *China: Vielvölkerreich und Einheitsstaat* [China: The Multi-Ethnic Empire and the United State] (Munich: Beck, 1997); Joseph W. Esherick, "How the Qing Became China," in *Empire to Nation: Historical Perspectives on the Making of the Modern World*, ed. Joseph Esherick, Hasan Kayali, and Eric Van Young (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 229–259.

4. Suny, "The Empire Strikes Out," 23.

5. For example, see Abeeb Khalid, "The Soviet Union as an Imperial Foundation: A View from Central Asia," in Stoler, McGranahan, and Perdue, *Imperial Formations*, 113–139.

6. Ross Terrill sees the PRC as a new empire in *The New Chinese Empire and What It Means for the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2003).

7. Charles Tilly gives the following definition: "An empire is a large composite polity linked to a central power by indirect rule. The central power exercises some military and fiscal control in each major segment of its imperial domain, but tolerates the two major elements of indirect rule: (1) retention or establishment of particular, distinct compacts for the government of each segment; and (2) exercise of power through intermediaries who enjoy considerable autonomy within their own domains in return for the delivery of compliance, tribute, and military collaboration with the center." Charles Tilly, "How Empires End," in Barkey and von Hagen, *After Empire*, 3.

8. Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, "Zentrale und Peripherie in China und Ostasien (1600–1900)" [Center and Periphery in China and East Asia, 1600–1900], in *Ostasien 1600–1900* [East Asia, 1600–1900], ed. Sepp Linhart and Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik (Vienna: Promedia, 2004), 82. Weigelin-Schwiedrzik made this argument for the Han Chinese periphery, not the "minority" areas.

9. Theodore. R. Weeks, *Across the Revolutionary Divide: Russia and the USSR, 1861–1945* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 89.

10. Andreas Kappeler, *Rußland als Vielvölkerreich: Entstehung, Geschichte, Zerfall* [Russia as Multi-Ethnic Empire: Origin, History, and Decline] (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2008), 68–69.

11. Ibid., 258.

12. For details, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006).

13. For an overview of the debate, see David Moon, "Late Imperial Peasants," in *Late Imperial Russia: Problems and Prospects*, ed. Ian D. Thatcher, 120–145 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005). Moon argues that the difference between the integration of the French and Russian peasants into the nation has been overstated in the past (pp. 140–141).

14. Ronald G. Suny, "The Russian Empire," in Barkey and von Hagen, *After Empire*, 143.

15. Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 1.

16. Josef Stalin, "Marxism and the Nation Question," in *J. V. Stalin Collected Works*, (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1953), 2:307.

17. For details, see Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

18. Kappeler, *Rußland als Vielvölkerreich*, 305.

19. Serhy Yekelchyk, "The Western Republics: Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova and the Baltics," in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 3: *The Twentieth Century*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 536.

20. Yuri Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism," *Slavic Review* 53, no. 2 (1994): 445.

21. Terry Martin, "An Affirmative Action Empire: The Soviet Union as the Highest Form of Imperialism," in Suny and Martin, *A State of Nations*, 80.

22. James Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism: How the Qing Frontier and Its Indigenes Became Chinese* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 11.

23. Patterson Giersch, "'Grieving for Tibet': Conceiving the Modern State in Late-Qing Inner Asia," *China Perspectives*, no. 3 (2008): 7.

24. Colin Mackerras, "Conclusion: Some Major Issues in Ethnic Classification," *China Information* 18, no. 2 (2004): 311.

25. Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*, 2–3.

26. Ibid., 39.

27. Zhou Minglang, "The Fate of the Soviet Model of Multinational National State Building in the People's Republic of China," in *China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949–Present*, ed. Thomas Bernstein and Li Hua-yu (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), 480.

28. On the difficulties of defining the ethnic categories, see Thomas Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); see also Dru C. Gladney, "Representing Nationality in China: Refiguring Majority/Minority Identities," *Journal of Asian Studies* 53, no. 1 (1994): 92–123.

29. Ingo Nentwig, "Nationalitäten und Nationalitätenpolitik in der VR China" [Nationalities and Nationality Policy in the PRC], *Marxistische Blätter* 4 (2008): 70.

30. Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*, 150.

31. One example of the existentialist approach was the creation of the Zhuang minority. See Katherine Palmer Kaup, *Creating the Zhuang: Ethnic Politics in China* (Boulder, CO: Rienner, 2000).

32. Melvyn C. Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon: China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 33–34.

33. For an online version of the agreement, see "The Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet"; http://www.china.org.cn/english/zhuanti/tibet%20facts/163877.htm; accessed May 3, 2010.

34. Melvyn Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet 1951–1955: The Calm before the Storm* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 37–38.

35. Mao Zedong, "Guanyu Xizang gongzuo de fangzhen" [Policy Guidelines Regarding the Work in Tibet] (April 6, 1952), in *Mao Zedong Xizang gongzuo wenxian* [Documents of Mao Zedong's Tibet Work], ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2008), 62.

36. Mullaney has argued that while labeling ethnic minorities, Chinese ethnographers did not fully adopt Stalin's definition of ethnic groups. In contrast to Stalin, they did not strictly distinguish between ethnicities *(minzu)* as a stage of capitalist development and premodern tribes *(buzu)* because otherwise only a few groups would have qualified as ethnicities. Thomas S. Mullaney, "Ethnic Classification Writ Large: The 1954 Yunnan Province Ethnic Classifications Project and Its Foundation in Republican-Era Taxonomic Thought," *China Information* 18, no. 2 (2004): 227.

37. Slezkine, "The USSR as a Communal Apartment," 435.

38. Leibold, *Reconfiguring Chinese Nationalism*, 181, 106.

39. Kappeler, *Rußland als Vielvölkerreich*, 136.

40. Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 461.

41. Andrea Graziosi, *Stalinism, Collectivization and the Great Famine* (Cambridge, MA: Ukrainian Studies Fund, 2009), 2–3.

42. Josef Stalin, "Concerning the National Question in Yugoslavia," in *J. V. Stalin Collected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1954), 7:71–72.

43. Graziosi, *Stalinism, Collectivization and the Great Famine*, 76, 81.

44. Stanislav Kul'čyc'kyj, "Terror als Methode: Der Hungergenozid in der Ukraine 1933" [Terror as Method: The Hunger Genocide in Ukraine 1933], *Osteuropa* 54, no. 12 (2004): 69–70.

45. Kappeler, *Rußland als Vielvölkerreich*, 188.

46. Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 293.

47. Graziosi, *Stalinism, Collectivization and the Great Famine*, 23.

48. Robert Conquest and Graziosi both quote Stalin's remark on the national question from 1925 and present it as an argument that he organized famine against peasants to smash Ukrainian nationalism in 1932–1933. Conquest writes: "But Stalin seems to have realized that only a mass terror throughout the body of the nation—that is, the peasantry—could really reduce the country to submission. His ideas about the connection between nationality and the peasantry are clearly put: 'The nationality problem is, in its very essence, a problem of the peasantry." Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 219. Conquest does not inform the reader that Stalin had made this statement in 1925 in a different context.

49. Stalin, "Concerning the National Question in Yugoslavia," 72.

50. For the Soviet Union, see Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 240. For China, see June T. Dreyer, *China's Forty Millions: Minority Nationalities and National Integration in the People's Republic of China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 170–171.

51. Robert Kindler, "Auf der Flucht: Die kasachischen Nomaden und die Hungersnot von 1930–1934" [On the Run: The Kazakh Nomads and the Famine of 1930–1934], in *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierungssysteme unter dem Staatssozialismus* [Hunger, Nutrition and Rationing under State Socialism], ed. Matthias Middell and Felix Wemheuer (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2011), 35.

52. Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 293.

53. Ibid., 303.

54. Ibid.

55. Quoted in Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 298. Józef Klemens Piłsudski (1867–1935) was the authoritarian leader of the second Polish republic. Stanislav Reden (1892–1940) was the head of the GPU (secret police) in Soviet Ukraine. Stanislav Kosior (1889–1939) was the first secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine from 1932 to 1938. During the Great Purge, he was executed.

56. Ibid., 307.

57. For more details on Skrypnyk, see James E. Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918–1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, monograph series, 1983), 192–231.

58. Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire*, 311.

59. "Zhonggong zhongyang dui Xizang jinxing minzu gaige he shousuo fangzheng de zhishi" [Instruction of the Central Committee of the CCP Regarding Carrying Out the Democratic Reforms in Tibet and Pulling Back the Policy Guidelines], in *Xizang gongzuo wenxian xuanbian*, ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2005), 199.

60. For more details, see Tsering Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows: A History of Modern Tibet since 1947* (London: Pimlico, 1999), 136–144.

61. Li Jianglin, *1959 Lasa!* [1959 Lhasa] (Xianggang: Xin shiji chuban jichuanmei youxian gongsi, 2010), 79.

62. Chen Yunfeng, ed., *Dangdai Qinghai jianshi* [A Short History of Modern Qinghai] (Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo chubanshe, 1996), 163.

63. Ibid., 157.

64. Between 1956 and 1958, about sixty thousand Tibetans had fled from Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan Provinces into Tibet. Wang Lixiong, "Reflections on Tibet," *New Left Review*, no. 14 (2002): 87.

65. Dreyer, *China's Forty Millions*, 158.

66. Ibid., 161.

67. For example, an article in *Minzu Tuanjie* [Ethnic Unity] about the Tibetan areas in Gansu was entitled "Communalization in a Single Strike," in *Tibet 1950–1967*, ed. Union Research Institute (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1968), 330–333.

68. Qinghai sheng difangzhi bianzuanweiyuanhui, ed., *Qinghai shengzhi, 14, xumuzhi* [Gazette of Qinghai Province, 14, Animal Husbandry] (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 1998).

69. Chen Yunfeng, *Dangdai Qinghai jianshi*, 138.

70. Qinghai sheng difangzhi bianzuanweiyuanhui, *Qinghai shengzhi, 14, xumuzhi*, 48.

71. Li Jianglin, *1959 Lasa!*, 77–79.

72. Ibid., 79

73. Ibid., 82.

74. "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan 'Guanyu minzu gongzuo huiyi de baogao'" [The Central Committee of the CCP Approaches and Forwards the Report Regarding the Conference on Minority Work] (June 20, 1962), in *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian* [A Collection of Important Documents since the Founding of the State], ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997), 15:521–522.

75. Mao Zedong, "Zhuanfa Qinghai shengwei guanyu zhenya panluan wenti de baogao de piyu" [Forwarding the Commentary on the Report of the Provincial Party Committee of Qinghai Regarding the Problem of Suppressing the Armed Rebellion] (June 24 1958), in *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* [Writings of Mao Zedong since the Establishment of the People's Republic of China], ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1992), 7:286.

76. E-mail conversation with Melvyn Goldstein, January 25, 2011.

77. For details, see Shakya, *The Dragon in the Land of Snows*, 186–211.

78. Wang Lixiong, *Reflections on Tibet*, 90.

79. Chen Yunfeng, *Dangdai Qinghai jianshi*, 163.

80. Ibid., 164.

81. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, ed., *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao* [Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China] (Baoding: Hebei sheng gongxiaoshe Baoding yinshuachang yinshua, 1989),2:1882–1883.

82. Chen Yunfeng, *Dangdai Qinghai jianshi*, 175.

83. Ibid., 140.

84. Ibid., 164.

85. Ibid., 167.

86. Dominic Lieven, "Russia as Empire and Periphery," in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 2: *1689–1917*, ed. Dominic Lieven (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 23.

Chapter 6. "Eating Mice for the Liberation of Tibet"

1. I will not include an analysis of the official post-Stalinist Soviet narrative regarding the famine of 1931–1933 in Ukraine because as long as the Soviet Union has existed, historians have considered the "economic difficulties" of that time as part of a nationwide crisis. It seems that the pressure felt by Soviet historians to prove that Ukraine is part of the Soviet Union was less than that felt by Chinese scholars, who have made great efforts up to the present day to prove that Tibet was a part of China. For details on the Soviet historiography of the famine, see Felix Wemheuer, "Regime Changes of Memories: Creating Official History of the Ukrainian and Chinese Famines under State Socialism and after the Cold War," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 10, no. 1 (2009): 34–39.

2. John Powers, *History as Propaganda: Tibetan Exiles versus the People's Republic of China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

3. For example, see Xie Weiming, *Kangzang gonglu jixing* [Record of the Kang-Zang Highway] (Shanghai: Shanghai chubanshe gongsi, 1955), and Gong Sixue, *Xin Zhongguo de xin Xizang* [The New Tibet of New China] (Beijing: Zhongguo qingnian chubanshe, 1955).

4. For example, see Luo Pinghan, *Tudi gaige yundongshi* [A History of the Land Reform Movement] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2005), and Xizang zizhiqu gaikuang bianxiezu, ed., *Xizang zizhiqu gaikuang* [The General Situation of the Tibet Autonomous Region] (Lhasa: Xizang renmin chubanshe, 1984).

5. Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, "White Paper: 50 Years of Democratic Reform in Tibet" (Beijing, 2009); http://www.china-un.org/eng/gdxw/t539939.htm; accessed October 6, 2010.

6. For example, see Mei Ge'ersitan, *Lama wangguo de fumie* [The Demise of the Lamaist State] (Beijing: Shishi chubanshe, 1994).

7. See Yang Jisheng, *Mubei: Zhongguo liushi niandai dajihuang jishi* [Tombstone: A Record of the Chinese Famine in the Sixties] (Hong Kong: Tiandi, 2008), and Cao Shuji, *Da jihuang* [The Great Famine] (Xianggang: Shidai guoji chuban youxiangongsi, 2005).

8. Goldstein writes a whole chapter on the food crisis of 1951–1952. Melvyn Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet 1951–1955: The Calm before the Storm* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 245–263.

9. Xizang zizhiqu gaikuang bianxiezu, *Xizang zizhiqu gaikuang*, 582.

10. Wang Gui and Huang Daoqun, *Shiba jun xianqian zhencha ke jin zang jishi* [Eyewitness Accounts of the Advanced Dispatched Entering of Tibet by the Scout Division of the 18th Army] (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 2001), 34; Yan Yan, *Xue dui Xizang shuo* [Blood Speaks for Tibet] (Shenyang: Shenyang chubanshe, 1993), 36–43; Xizang zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Xizang zizhiqu liangshi zhi* [Grain Gazette of the Tibet Autonomous Region] (Beijing: Zhongguo Zangxue chubanshe, 2007), 21.

11. Wang and Huang, *Shiba jun xianqian zhencha ke jin zang jishi*, 34.

12. Ibid., 158; see also Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet 1951–1955*, 256.

13. *Tsampa* is the traditional staple foodstuff in central Tibet. It is usually roasted barley flour, which can be mixed with salty tea butter; Wang and Huang, *Shiba jun xianqian zhencha ke jin zang jishi*, 53.

14. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet 1951–1955*, 245.

15. Mao Zedong, "Guanyu Xizang gongzuo de fangzhen" [Policy Guidelines Regarding the Work in Tibet] (April 6, 1952), in *Mao Zedong Xizang gongzuo wenxian*, ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2008), 62.

16. Yan Yan, *Xue dui Xizang shuo*, 32.

17. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet 1951–1955*, 257.

18. Ibid., 260.

19. As an example of this narrative, see Xie Weiming, *Kangzang gonglu jixing*.

20. Xizang zizhiqu gaikuang bianxiezu, *Xizang zizhiqu gaikuang*, 583–584.

21. Xizang zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Xizang zizhiqu liangshi zhi*, 2.

22. Quoted in Melvyn C. Goldstein, ed., *A Tibetan Revolutionary: The Political Life and Times of Bapa Phüntso Wangye* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 161

23. Ibid., 173.

24. Goldstein, *A History of Modern Tibet 1951–1955*, 250.

25. Xizang zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Xizang zizhiqu liangshi zhi*, 293.

26. Ibid., 2.

27. Wang Gui, *Xizang lishi diwei bian* [On the Status of Tibet in History] (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2003), 518.

28. Ibid., 519.

29. Xizang zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Xizang zizhiqu liangshi zhi*, 3.

30. Ibid., 22.

31. Ibid., 9.

32. "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan 'Guanyu minzu gongzuo huiyi de baogao'" [The Central Committee of the CCP Approaches and Forwards the Report Regarding the Conference on Minority Work] (May 15, 1962), in *Jianguo yilai zhongyao*

wenxian xuanbian, ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997), 15:525.

33. Deng Xiaoping, "Zai Xizang de zhengce yaofang 'zuo' fangji, yaowen" [Regarding the Urgency of Preventing Leftist Mistakes and Promoting Stability] (January 5, 1961), in *Xizang gongzuo wenxian xuanbian*, ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2005), 243.

34. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu Xizang gongzuo fangzhen de zhishi" [Instructions of the Central Committee Regarding the Policy Guidelines of the Work in Tibet] (April 21, 1961), in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi, *Xizang gongzuo wenxian xuanbian*, 256.

35. Xizang zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Xizang zizhiqu liangshi zhi*, 207.

36. Henan shengzhi difangshizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Henan shengzhi: Liang-you maoyi* [Gazette of Henan Province: Grain and Oil Trade], vol. 44 (Zhengzhou: Henan renmin chubanshe, 1993), 40.

37. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, ed., *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao* [Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China] (Baoding: Hebei sheng gongxiaoshe Baoding yinshuachang yinshua, 1989), 2:1882–1883; Xizang zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Xizang zizhiqu liangshi zhi*, 213.

38. Xizang zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Xizang zizhiqu liangshi zhi*, 77.

39. Ibid., 92.

40. Ma Rong, *Xizang de renkou yu shehui* [The Population and Society of Tibet] (Beijing: Tongxin chubanshe, 1996), 34.

41. Yang Kuifu, *Zhongguo shaoshu minzu renkou* [The Population of the Minority Nationalities in China] (Beijing: Zhongguo renkou chubanshe, 1995), 21.

42. Shen Lin, *Sanza ju shaoshu minzu tongji yu fenxi* [Analysis and Statistics of Minorities Who Live Scattered] (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2003), 28.

43. For Liu Juan's analysis, see Yang Kuifu, *Zhongguo shaoshu minzu renkou*, 21.

44. Ma Rong, *Xizang de renkou yu shehui*, 35.

45. Yan Hao, "Tibetan Population in China: Myths and Facts Re-Examined," *Asian Ethnicity* 1, no. 1, (2000): 24–25. According to a statement of the Tibetan government-in-exile of 1976, 5,000–10,000 Tibetans died in the uprising. A Chinese book that was later banned states that 93,000 Tibetans in the rebel forces were killed, wounded, or imprisoned in central Tibet between 1959 and 1961; Anne-Marie Blondeau and Katia Buffetrille, eds., *Authenticating Tibet: Answers to China's 100 Questions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 105.

46. "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan 'Guanyu minzu gongzuo huiyi de baogao,'" 525.

47. Xizang zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Xizang zizhiqu liangshi zhi*, 9.

48. Yan Hao, "Tibetan Population in China," 21.

49. The refugee's comment is in Information Office of H. H. the Dalai Lama, ed., *Tibet under Chinese Communist Rule: A Compilation of Refugee Statements 1958–1975* (Dharamsala: Information Office of H. H. the Dalai Lama, 1976), 89.

50. Still less is known about the level of nutrition in Tibet during the Cultural Revolution. In his latest book, Melvyn Goldstein describes the Nyema (Nimu) Incident of 1969 as a bloody peasant uprising whose goal was to reduce the heavy tax burden in the context of the factional struggles during the Cultural Revolution. In Nimu, a county near Lhasa, the Maoist Gyenlo faction attacked the collection of grain and promised the peasants that the annual rations would be increased from 12 *khe* (168 kilograms, 460 grams per day) per person to 18 *khe*. Melvyn Goldstein, Ben Jiao, and Tanzen Lhundrup, *On the Cultural Revolution in Tibet: The Nyemo Incident of 1969* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 61–64.

Goldstein's research shows one of the bloodiest events of the Cultural Revolution in Tibet in a new light, where the conflict reflected the tension not only between Han Chinese and Tibetans, but also among the Tibetans themselves, among whom bloody fights broke out.

51. Dalai Lama, *My Land and My People* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962), 223.

52. Ma Rong, *Xizang de renkou yu shehui*, 177.

53. Yan Hao, "Tibetan Population in China," 17.

54. Ma Rong, *Xizang de renkou yu shehui*, 174, 184. According to the petition of the Panchen Lama, 110,000 monks and nuns lived in 2,500 monasteries before the "democratic reforms." This number was reduced to 70 monasteries with a population of around 7,000 people, figures that would represent a reduction of 93 percent. Panchen Lama, *A Poisoned Arrow: The Secret Report of the 10th Panchen Lama; the Full Text of the Panchen Lama's 70,000 Character Petition of 1962, Together with a Selection of Supporting Historical Documents* (London: Tibet Information Network, 1997), 52.

55. "Tong Banchan e'erdeni de tanhua" [Talk with the Panchen Lama], in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiu shi, *Xizang gongzuo wenxian xuanbian*, 247.

56. "Lamas Must Take the Socialist Road," in *Tibet 1950–1967*, ed. Union Research Institute (Hong Kong: Union Research Institute, 1968), 232–234.

57. Quoted in Anna Louise Strong, *When the Serfs Stood Up in Tibet* (Beijing: New World Press, 1965), 241.

58. Ma Rong, *Xizang de renkou yu shehui*, 199.

59. For details, see Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, "Re-Imagining the Chinese Peasant: The Historiography on the Great Leap Forward," in *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China's Great Leap Forward and Famine*, ed. Kimberley Manning and Felix Wemheuer (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 42–46.

Chapter 7. "Genocide against the Nation"

1. Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, *Erinnerungen im globalen Zeitalter: Der Holocaust* [Memory in the Global Age: The Holocaust] (Frankfurt [M]: Suhrkamp, 2001), 150.

2. Regarding food and nation building, see Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine* (Chicago: University of Chicago

Press, 2004), and Jeffrey M. Pilcher, *Que vivan los tamales! Food and the Making of Mexican Identity* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998).

3. James Vernon, *Hunger: A Modern History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007), 42–43.

4. Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (London: Verso, 2001), 7.

5. Sugata Bose, "Pondering Poverty, Fighting Famines: Towards a New History of Economic Ideas," in *Arguments for a Better World: Essays in Honor of Amartya Sen*, ed. Kaushi Basu and Ravi Kanbur (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 2:430.

6. Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts*, 22.

7. Noel Kissane, *The Irish Famine: A Documentary History* (Dublin: Nation Library of Ireland, 1995), 38.

8. Cormac Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 82.

9. Peter Gray, *The Irish Famine* (London: Harry N. Abrams, 1995), 95.

10. Kerby Miller, "'Revenge for Skibbereen': Irish Emigration and the Meaning of the Great Famine," in *The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora in America*, ed. Arthur Gribben (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 181.

11. Ibid., 181; see also Cathal Poirteir, *Famine Echoes* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1995), 5.

12. For the Irish nationalist debate, see Vernon, *Hunger*, 44–48.

13. John Mitchel, *The Crusade of the Period and Last Conquest of Ireland (Perhaps)* (New York: Lynch, Cole and Meehan, 1878), 323–324.

14. Cormac Ó Gráda, "Foreword," in Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley, *Tears from Iron: Cultural Responses to Famine in Nineteenth-Century China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), xix.

15. Gray, *The Irish Famine*, 127.

16. Miller, "'Revenge for Skibbereen,'" 189, 181.

17. Mick Mulcrone, "The Famine and Collective Memory: The Role of the Irish-American Press in the Early Twentieth Century," in Gribben, *The Great Famine and the Irish Diaspora in America*, 234.

18. Christine Kinealy, *The Great Irish Famine: Impact, Ideology and Rebellion* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 3.

19. Ibid., 14.

20. Kissane, *The Irish Famine*, 180.

21. See Barry Sautman, "Association, Federation and 'Genuine' Autonomy: The Dalai Lama's Proposals and Tibet Independence," *China Information* 14, no. 2 (2000): 46.

22. John Powers, *History as Propaganda: Tibetan Exiles versus the People's Republic of China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 156.

23. Stephanie Roemer, *The Tibetan Government-in-Exile: Politics at Large* (London: Routledge, 2008), 147.

24. Melvyn C. Goldstein, *The Snow Lion and the Dragon: China, Tibet, and the Dalai Lama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 16.

25. Dalai Lama, *Freedom in Exile: The Autobiography of the Dalai Lama* (New York: Harper One, 1991), 165, 235, and 249. In 1948, the United Nations enacted the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide," which specifically defined genocide. The definition is quoted in Jennifer Balint and Israel W. Charny, "Definitions of Genocide," in *Encyclopaedia of Genocide*, ed. Israel W. Charny (Denver: ABC-Clio, 1999), 1:11, and I present it in the text below.

26. "Tibet: Proving Truth from the Facts" (1996), official website of the Central Tibet Administration; http://www.tibet.net/en/index.php?id=149&rmenuid=11; accessed June 2, 2010.

27. Anne-Marie Blondeau and Katia Buffetrille, eds., *Authenticating Tibet: Answers to China's 100 Questions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008,) 89.

28. Dalai Lama, *My Land and My People* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962), 223.

29. Yang Kuifu, *Zhongguo shaoshu minzu renkou* [The Population of the Minority Nationalities in China] (Beijing: Zhongguo renkou chubanshe, 1995), 21.

30. "Tibet: Proving Truth from the Facts" (1996).

31. Ibid.

32. Thomas Laird, *The Story of Tibet: Conversations with His Holiness the Dalai Lama* (New York: Groove Press, 2006), 315.

33. In the beginning, the leadership of the CCP accepted the report as a valuable criticism. Mao Zedong even met with the Panchen Lama to discuss the petition. After Mao had attacked the United Front Work Department in the summer of 1962, things changed, and the report was then considered "anti-Socialist" and a "poisoned arrow." Especially the passage stating that the Tibetan nationality was close to death was unacceptable to Mao. In December 1964, the Panchen Lama was dismissed from his post as chairman of the Preparatory Committee of the TAR. During the Cultural Revolution he was taken to Beijing for several struggle sessions of the Red Guards and was not released from prison before 1977.

34. Panchen Lama, *A Poisoned Arrow: The Secret Report of the 10th Panchen Lama; the Full Text of the Panchen Lama's 70,000 Character Petition of 1962, Together with a Selection of Supporting Historical Documents* (London: Tibet Information Network, 1997), 82.

35. Ibid., 112.

36. Ibid., 103.

37. Tsering Dorje Gashi, *New Tibet: Memoirs of a Graduate of the Peking Institute of National Minorities* (Dharamsala: Information Office of H. H. the Dalai Lama, 1980), 11.

38. Quoted in ibid., 25.

39. Dawa Norbu, *Red Star over Tibet* (New York: Envoy Press, 1987), 208. *Chang* is a beer made of barley.

40. Quoted in ibid., 216.

41. Dhondub Choedon, *Life in the Red Flag People's Commune* (Dharamsala: Information Office of H. H. the Dalai Lama, 1978), 37–38.

42. Information Office of H. H. the Dalai Lama, ed., *Tibet under Communist Rule: A Compilation of Refugee Statements 1958–1975* (Dharamsala: Information Office of H. H. the Dalai Lama, 1976), 73.

43. Tsering Dorje Gashi, *New Tibet*, 73.
44. Ibid., 106.
45. Dawa Norbu, *Red Star over Tibet*, 212.
46. Dhondub Choedon, *Life in the Red Flag People's Commune*, 36.
47. Ibid., 61–62.
48. Tubten Khetsun, *Memories of Life in Lhasa under Chinese Rule* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 271.
49. Ibid., 209.
50. Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: China's Secret Famine* (London: John Murray, 1996), 168.
51. Some examples can also be found in the following pro-Soviet book: Douglas Tottle, *Fraud, Famine and Fascism: The Ukrainian Genocide Myth from Hitler to Harvard* (Toronto: Progress Books, 1987), 36–44.
52. Ukrainian Association of Victims of Russian Communist Terror, ed., *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin: A White Book* (Toronto, 1953–1955).
53. Frank Sysyn, "The Ukrainian Famine of 1932–3: The Role of the Ukrainian Diaspora in Research and Public Discussion," in *Studies in Comparative Genocide*, ed. Levon Chorbajian and George Shirinian (London: Macmillan, 1999), 184.
54. For a detailed description, see Johan Dietsch, *Making Sense of Suffering: Holocaust and Holodomor in Ukrainian Historical Culture* (Lund: Lund University Press, 2006), 122–146. Frank Sysyn strongly denies that the famine issue was merely the creation of new anti-Soviet propaganda. Sysyn, "The Ukrainian Famine of 1932–3," 201.
55. Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 3, 272.
56. Gerhard Simon, "Holodomor als Waffe: Stalinismus, Hunger und der ukrainische Nationalismus" [Holodomor as a Weapon: Stalinism, Hunger, and Ukrainian Nationalism], *Osteuropa* 54, no. 12 (2004): 49.
57. Quoted in Balint and Charny, "Definitions of Genocide," 1:11.
58. *Report to Congress: Commission on the Ukraine Famine* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), vii.
59. James E. Mace, "Ukrainian Genocide," in Charny, *Encyclopaedia of Genocide*, 2:565.
60. R. J. Rummel, "The New Concept of Democide," in Charny, *Encyclopaedia of Genocide*, 1:21.
61. Kurt Jonassohn, "Famine as a Method of Genocide," in Charny, *Encyclopaedia of Genocide*, 1:226.
62. Norman M. Naimark, *Stalin und der Genozid* [Stalin's Genocides] (Frankfurt [M]: Suhrkamp, 2010), 28–29.
63. Ibid., 81–82.
64. David Marcus, "Famine Crimes in International Law," *American Journal of International Law* 97, no. 2 (2003): 267.
65. Andrea Graziosi, *Stalinism, Collectivization and the Great Famine* (Cambridge, MA: Ukrainian Studies Fund, 2009), 81. Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (London: Bodley Head, 2010), 42. In the chapter "The Soviet Famines," Snyder quotes many times from the works of Davies/Wheat-

croft and Barbara Falk. These scholars do not support the thesis that the famine was an organized genocide. However, Snyder does not inform the reader that different interpretations of the famine exist. He just picks out some facts that serve his own arguments.

66. James E. Mace, *Communism and the Dilemmas of National Liberation: National Communism in Soviet Ukraine, 1918–1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1983), 292.

67. Between 2 and 3 million people died in Russia. Hiroaki Kuromiya, "The Soviet Famine of 1932–1933 Reconsidered," *Europe-Asia Studies* 60, no. 4 (2008): 667. It is hard to estimate how many ethnic Russians died because many regions of the Russian Soviet Republic were multi-ethnic and Kuban was mainly populated with ethnic Ukrainians.

68. R. W. Davies and Stephen G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931–1933* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 415.

69. Roman Serbyn, "The Ukrainian Famine of 1932–1933 as Genocide in the Light of the UN Convention of 1948," *Ukrainian Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (2006): 200; http://www.archives.gov.ua/Sections/Famine/Serbyn-2006.php; accessed October 2, 2007.

70. Snyder, *Bloodlands*, 43.

71. For example, see Barbara B. Green, "Stalinist Terror and the Question of Genocide: The Great Famine," in *Is the Holocaust Unique? Perspectives on Comparative Genocide*, ed. Alan S. Rosenbaum (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 137–161; Mark B. Tauger, "Le Livre Noire du Communisme on the Soviet Famine of 1932–1933" (1998), 2; http://www.as.wvu.edu/history/Faculty/Tauger/Tauger,%20Chapter%20for%20Roter%20Holocaust%20book%20b.pdf; accessed May 5, 2011.

72. Stephan Merl, "War die Hungersnot von 1932–1933 eine Folge der Zwangskollektivierung der Landwirtschaft oder wurde sie bewusst im Rahmen der Nationalitätenpolitik herbeigeführt?" [Was the Famine of 1932–1933 a Result of the Forced Collectivization of Agriculture or Was It Intentionally Organized in the Context of Nationality Policies?] in *Ukraine: Gegenwart und Geschichte eines neuen Staates*, ed. Guido Hausmann and Andreas Kappeler (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1993), 157. Snyder acknowledges that many grain hunters on the local level were young Ukrainians; Snyder, *Bloodlands*, 39. *Bloodlands* is not a nationalist Ukrainian narrative but a contribution to the theory of totalitarianism. Scholars who support this theory often believe that the famine was used for mass murder.

73. Stephen Wheatcroft, "Die sowjetische und die chinesische Hungersnot in historischer Perspektive" [The Soviet and Chinese Famines in Historical Perspective], in *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierungssysteme unter dem Staatssozialismus* [Hunger, Nutrition and Rationing under State Socialism], ed. Matthias Middell and Felix Wemheuer (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2011), 118.

74. Mark B. Tauger, "Grain Crisis or Famine? The Ukrainian State Commission for Aid to Crop-Failure Victims and the Ukrainian Famine of 1928–29," in *Provincial Landscapes: Local Dimensions of Soviet Power 1917–1953*, ed. Donald J. Raleigh (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2001), 168.

75. Kuromiya, "The Soviet Famine of 1932–1933 Reconsidered," 668, 670.

76. Tauger, "Le Livre Noire du Communisme on the Soviet Famine of 1932–1933," 4–5.

77. Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, 200.

78. Ibid., 196.

79. Ibid., 169–179.

80. Snyder, *Bloodlands*, 44–45; Tauger, "Le Livre Noire du Communisme on the Soviet Famine of 1932–1933," 10–11.

81. Valarij Vasil'ev, "Zwischen Politisierung und Historisierung: Der Holodomor in der ukrainischen Historiographie" [Between Politicization and Historization: The Holodomor in Ukrainian Historiography], *Osteuropa* 54, no. 12 (2004): 168.

82. See Lubomyr Luciuk, ed., *Not Worthy: Walter Duranty's Pulitzer Prize and the New York Times* (Kingston, Ont.: Kashtan, 2004), 116–117, 142–145.

83. Wilfried Jilge, "Holodomor und Nation: Der Hunger im ukrainischen Geschichtsbild" [Holodomor and Nation: Hunger in the Ukrainian View of History], *Osteuropa* 54, no. 12 (2004): 153.

84. Catherine Wanner, *Burden of Dreams: History and Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 43.

85. Ibid., xxiv.

86. Andreas Kappeler, *Kleine Geschichte der Ukraine* [Short History of Ukraine] (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1994), 259.

87. John-Paul Himka, "Johan Dietsch, *Making Sense of Suffering: Holocaust and Holodomor in Ukrainian Historical Culture*" (review), *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 8, no. 3 (2007): 683–694.

88. Dietsch, *Making Sense of Suffering*, 222.

89. Levy and Sznaider, *Erinnerungen im globalen Zeitalter*, 150, 216.

90. See Alan E. Steinweis, "The Auschwitz Analogy: Holocaust Memory and American Debates over Intervention in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 19, no. 2 (2005): 276–289.

91. Dietsch, *Making Sense of Suffering*, 233.

92. Ibid., 222.

93. See "President Yushchenko: Speeches on the Holodomor"; http://www.augb.co.uk/president-yushchenko-speeches.php; accessed June 10, 2011.

94. Jacques Vallin, France Mesle, Serguei Adamets, and Serhii Pyrozhkov, "A New Estimate of Ukrainian Population Losses during the Crises of the 1930s and 1940s," *Population Studies* 56, no. 3 (2002): 262; see also Snyder, *Bloodlands*, 53;

95. Jeffrey C. Alexander and Ron Eyerman, eds., *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 1.

96. Ron Eyerman, "Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity," in Alexander and Eyerman, *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, 75.

97. Davies and Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger*, 407.

98. Simon, "Holodomor als Waffe," 52.

99. About the problems and challenges to writing the history of Ukraine, see "Discussion" in *Slavic Review* 54, no. 3 (1995): 658–723.

100. Kappeler, *Kleine Geschichte der Ukraine*, 252.

Epigraph to page 219: James Legge, ed., *The Chinese Classics*, vol. 2: *The Works of Mencius* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1970), 132.

Epilogue

1. Alexander De Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 15–16.

2. Ibid., 214.

3. Elizabeth J. Perry, "Chinese Conception of 'Rights' from Mencius to Mao—and Now," *Perspectives on Politics* 6, no. 1 (2008): 38.

4. I could find only a few articles in which the term was mentioned in the electronic archives of the newspaper. For example, see Hu Yuzhi, "Renmin ziji de guojia" [The People's Own State], *RMRB*, November 14, 1948, and "Wei fangu he fazhan renmin de shengli er fendou" [Struggle to Consolidate and Develop the Victory of the People], *RMRB*, October 1, 1950.

5. Ralph Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China: Mao's Great Leap Forward Famine and the Origins of Righteous Resistance in Da Fo Village* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 358, 231.

6. Robert Ash, "Squeezing the Peasants: Grain Extraction, Food Consumption and Rural Living Standards in Mao's China," *China Quarterly*, no. 188 (2006): 971.

7. For details, see Felix Wemheuer, "Regime Changes of Memories: Creating Official History of the Ukrainian and Chinese Famines under State Socialism and after the Cold War," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 10, no. 1 (2009): 36–43. In China, the famine remained a taboo topic until the 1980s. See Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, "Trauma and Memory: The Case of the Great Famine in the People's Republic of China (1959–1961)," *Historiography East and West*, no. 1. (2003): 39–67.

8. For details, see Felix Wemheuer, "Dealing with Responsibility for the Great Leap Famine in the People's Republic of China," *China Quarterly*, no. 201 (2010): 176–195.

9. Yang Dali, *Calamity and Reform in China: State, Rural Society, and Institutional Change since the Great Leap Famine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 101.

10. In China during the Cultural Revolution, the government never officially questioned the so-called "60 point decision" of the People's Communes from 1961 that allowed private plots and made the production team the core of ownership of the means of production and management. The radical left called for a revision of this policy but failed to gain the support of Mao Zedong (David Zweig, *Agrarian Radicalism in China, 1968–1981* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989], 48). However, the party left succeeded in imposing restrictions on private plots between 1968–1970 and 1975–1977. Furthermore, in national models such as the People's Commune in Dazhai more radical versions of Socialist agriculture were imposed, and private plots were abolished. In some places the radicals manipulated their policies successfully. Ironically, after the death of Mao, the agrarian policies radicalized. The new leadership under Hua Guofeng promoted the

transition in the People's Communes from the team to the higher level of brigade accounting (Yang Dali, *Calamity and Reform in China*, 101).

11. Josef Stalin, *Ökonomische Probleme des Sozialismus in der UdSSR* [Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR] (Beijing: Verlag für Fremdsprachige Literatur, 1972), 79.

12. Conversation with Stephen Wheatcroft, University of Melbourne, June 2010.

13. Stephan Merl, "Entstalinisierung, Reformen und Wettlauf der Systeme 1953–1964" [Destalinization, Reforms, and Competition of the Systems 1953–1964], in *Handbuch der Geschichte Russlands*, vol. 5: *1945–1991*, part 1, ed. Stefan Plaggenborg (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2002), 224.

14. Zhores Medvedev, *Soviet Agriculture* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 198.

15. Stephen Hanson, "The Brezhnev Era," in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 3: *The Twentieth Century*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 302. For more details on the event, see Samuel H. Baron, *Bloody Saturday in the Soviet Union: Novocherkassk, 1962* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

16. Medvedev, *Soviet Agriculture*, 193.

17. Ibid., 197.

18. Ibid., 125.

19. Thomas M. Bohn, "Bevölkerung und Sozialstruktur" [Population and Social Structure], in *Handbuch der Geschichte Russlands*, vol. 5: *1945–1991*, part 2, "Vom Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges zum Zusammenbruch der Sowjetunion," ed. Stefan Plaggenborg (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2003), 597, 614, 621.

20. Neil J. Melvin, *Soviet Power and the Countryside: Policy Innovation and Institutional Decay* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 4.

21. Ibid., 32.

22. Esther Kingston-Mann, "Transforming Peasants in the Twentieth Century: Dilemmas of Russian, Soviet and Post-Soviet Development," in Suny, *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 3: *The Twentieth Century*, 428.

23. Stefan Plaggenborg, "'Entwickelter Sozialismus' und Supermacht 1964–1985" ["Developed Socialism" and Super Power 1964–1985], in Plaggenborg, *Handbuch der Geschichte Russlands*, vol. 5: *1945–1991*, part 1, 334–340.

24. Medvedev, *Soviet Agriculture*, 385.

25. Kingston-Mann, "Transforming Peasants in the Twentieth Century," 431.

26. For a new evaluation of the Brezhnev era, see Edwin Bacon and Mark Sandle, eds., *Brezhnev Reconsidered* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

27. Medvedev, *Soviet Agriculture*, 323.

28. Ibid., 365–366.

29. Ibid., 214.

30. For an overview, see Ash, "Squeezing the Peasants," 959–997.

31. Ibid., 990.

32. Jin Chongji, ed., *Zhou Enlai zhuan* [A Biography of Zhou Enlai] (Beijing: Zongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1998) 4:1894.

33. Luo Pinghan, *Gongshe! Gongshe! Nongcun renmingongshe* [Communes! Communes! The Rural People's Communes] (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2003), 335.

34. Most mass killings took place after the state had already demobilized mass organizations and established the new revolutionary committees. The killings were more the result of (local) state repression than a conflict among independent groups. Yang Su, "Mass Killings in the Cultural Revolution: A Study of Three Provinces," in *The Chinese Cultural Revolution as History*, ed. Joseph W. Esherick, Paul G. Pickowicz, and Andrew Walder (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006), 121.

35. Zhonghuarenmin gongheguo caizhengbu "Zhongguo nongmin fudan shi" bianji weiyuanhui bianzhu, ed., *Zhongguo nongmin fudanshi* [The History of the Burden of the Chinese Peasants] (Beijing: Zhongguo caizheng jingji chubanshe, 1991), 279–283.

36. Two major monographs on population policy made some references to the grain problem, but they did not systematically explore the relation between the famine and the introduction of birth control. See Tyrene White, *China's Longest Campaign: Birth Planning in the People's Republic, 1949–2005* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), and Susan Greenhalgh and Edwin Winckler, *Governing China's Population: From Leninist to Neoliberal Biopolitics* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005).

37. White, *China's Longest Campaign*, 6.

38. Guojia renkou yu jihua shengyu weiyuanhui, ed., *Zhongguo renkou he jihua shengyu shi* [The History of Population and Birth Planning in China] (Beijing: Zhongguo renkou chubanshe, 2007), 44.

39. Sun Muhan, *Zhongguo jihua shengyu shigao* [A History of Birth Planning in China] (Changchun: Beifang funü ertong chubanshe, 1987), 123–124.

40. Ibid., 49.

41. "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan pizhun 'Di er ci chengshi gongzuo huiyi jiyao' de zhishi" [The Central Committee and the State Council Approve the Instruction Regarding "The Minutes of the Second Urban Work Conference"], in *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, ed. Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997), 17:298–299.

42. Zhou Enlai, "Yinggai queli shehuizhuyi renkou lun de zhengque guannian" [We Should Establish Correct Views on Socialist Population Theory], in *Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 16:543.

43. For example, see "Guanyu jihua shengyu gongzuo wenti: Guowuyuan jihua shengyu bangongshe zuren Yang Zhengya zai Hunan sheng di san ci jihua shengyu gongzuo huiyi de jianghua" [Regarding Birth Planning: The Speech of the Head of the Birth Planning Office of the State Council, Yang Zhengya, on the Third Birth Planning Conference of Hunan Province], in *Zhongguo jihua shengyu quanshu* [Comprehensive Volume of Birth Planning in China], ed. Peng Peiyun (Beijing: Zhongguo renkou chubanshe, 1997), 293. Yang argued that if 1 billion fewer people were born in the next fifty years, 225 million tons of grain could be saved.

44. Guojia renkou yu jihua shengyu weiyuanhui, *Zhongguo renkou he jihua shengyu shi*, 67.

45. Lu Yu, ed., *Xin Zhongguo renkou wushinian* [50 Years' Population of New China] (Beijing: Zhongguo renkou chubanshe, 2004), 1:633–634.

46. Sun Muhan, *Zhongguo jihua shengyu shigao*, 169.

47. Lu Yu, *Xin Zhongguo renkou wushinian*, 1:633–634.

48. For example, see Thomas Scharping, *Umsiedlungsprogramme für Chinas Jugend 1955–1980: Probleme der Stadt-Land-Beziehungen in der chinesischen Entwicklungspolitik* [Policies of Resettlement for China's Youth 1955–1980: Problems of Urban-Rural Relations in China's Development Policies] (Hamburg: Institut für Asienkunde, 1981), 425, 433, and Michel Bonnin (Pan Mingxiao) and Annie Au-Yeung (Ou Yangzin), *Shiluo de yidai: Zhongguo shanshang de xiaxiang yundong (1968–1980)* [The Lost Generation: The Rustification of Chinese Youth (1968–1980)] (Xianggang: Zhongguo dabaike quanshu chubanshe, 2010), 53–55.

49. Lu Yu, *Xin Zhongguo renkou wushinian*, 1:601. Between 1962 and 1981, 17,776,600 million urban youth were sent down. Around 2,771,000 of them settled in the countryside and did not return to the cities. Ibid., 549.

50. Between 1966 and 1976, Beijing sent down 500,000 young people, and Tianjin sent 349,000. Shanghai mobilized 601,600 educated youth between 1968 and 1976. Ibid., 546.

51. For the different and competing goals of the campaign, see Thomas Bernstein, *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages: The Transfer of Youth from Urban to Rural China* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 33–84.

52. Ding Yizhuang, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi: chulan, 1953–1968* [History of the Educated Youth in China: The First Wave, 1953–1968] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe, 1998), 237.

53. Liu Xiaomeng, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi, dachao, 1966–1980* [History of the Educated Youth in China: The Big Wave, 1966–1980] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe, 1998), 192.

54. Scharping, *Umsiedlungsprogramme für Chinas Jugend 1955–1980*, 271.

55. Liu Xiaomeng, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi, dachao, 1966–1980*, 401–403.

56. Liu Xiaomeng and Ding Yizhuang, *Zhongguo zhiqing shidian* [Standard Work of Scholarship on the Educated Youth in China] (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1995), 517.

57. Zhao Fasheng, *Dangdai Zhongguo de liangshi gongzuo* [Grain Work in Modern China] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1988), 142.

58. Jin Dalu, *Feichang yu Zhengchang: Shanghai "wenge" shiqi de shehui shenghuo* [Unusual and Normal: Social Life in Shanghai during the "Cultural Revolution"] (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2011), 2:65.

59. Lu Yu, ed., *Xin Zhongguo renkou wushinian*, 1:601–602. For different numbers see Bonnin and Au-Yeung, *Shiluo de yidai*, 57–58. It is not clear how many recruited peasants became part of the permanent workforce in the cities.

60. Zhao Fasheng, *Dangdai Zhongguo de liangshi gongzuo*, 143.

61. Ibid., 160.

62. Ibid., 170.

63. Ibid., 145.

64. Yang Dali, *Calamity and Reform in China*, 108.

65. Zhao Fasheng, *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo*, 294; Jin Chongji, *Zhou Enlai zhuan*, 4:1809–1810.

66. "1975 nian de Zhongguo xianfa" [The Chinese Constitution of 1975]; http://61.145.119.78:8082/show.aspx?id=290&cid=27; accessed May 18, 2010.

67. Lu Yu, *Xin Zhongguo renkou wushinian*, 1:84, 188–190.

68. For example, see Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao*, 1:600, 608.

69. Ibid., 476.

70. Vaclav Smil, *China's Past, China's Future: Energy, Food, Environment* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 94.

71. Smil estimated food availability for 1957 and 1974 and came to the conclusion that consumption per capita had improved only very little—if at all—between these years; ibid., 89.

72. Fu Shanglun, Hu Guohua, and Feng Dongshu, eds., *Gaobie ji'e 1978* [Farewell to Hunger 1978] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2008), and Chen Dabin, *Ji'e yinfa de biange: Yige zishen jizhe de qinshen jingli yu sikao* [A Transformation That Was Caused by Hunger: Thoughts and Personal Experiences of a Senior Journalist] (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 1998).

73. Fu Shanglun, Hu Guohua, and Feng Dongshu, *Gaobie ji'e 1978*, 40–42.

74. Chen Dabin, *Ji'e yinfa de biange*, 105 and 172.

75. Ash, "Squeezing the Peasants," 981.

76. Flemming Christiansen, "Food Security, Urbanization and Social Stability in China," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9, no. 4 (2009): 552.

77. Josef Nussbaumer and Guido Rüthemann, *Gewalt, Macht, Hunger: Schwere Hungerkatastrophen seit 1845* [Violence, Power, and Hunger: Catastrophes of Hunger since 1845] (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2003), 1:116.

78. For more details, see Greenhalgh and Winckler, *Governing China's Population*, 93–130; Thomas Scharping and Robert Heuser, eds., *Geburtenplanung in China: Analysen, Daten, Dokumente* [Birth Planning: Analysis, Data, and Documents] (Hamburg: Mitteilungen des Instituts für Asienkunde, 1995), 49.

79. "Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu kongzhi woguo renkou zengchang wenti zhi quanti gongchandang yuan, gongqing tuan yuan de gongkai xin," in *Shiyi jie san zhong quanhui yilai jihua shengyu zhongyao wenjian xuanbian* [A Selection of Important Documents on Birth Planning since the 11th Session of the Third Meeting of the Plenary Session], ed. Guojia jihua shengyu weiyuanhui xuanchuan jiaoyu si (Beijing: Zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 1989), 4.

80. For the connection between birth planning and the grain problem, see also: Scharping and Heuser, *Geburtenplanung in China*, 49–50.

81. Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 214.

82. Ibid., 213.

83. Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), 182.

84. For Mao's remarks on democratic centralism, see Mao Zedong, "Zai kuoda de zhongyang gongzuo huiyi shang de jiang hua" [Speech on the Expanded Working Conference of the Central Committee], in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian*, 15:115–123.

85. Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *The Amartya Sen and Jean Drèze Omnibus, India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 77.

86. Michael Ellman, "The 1947 Soviet Famine and the Entitlement Approach to Famine," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 24, no. 5 (2000): 620.

87. Kathryn Edgerton-Tarpley, "The Loss of Heaven: Changing Responses to Famine in Late Imperial and Modern China, 1876–1961," unpublished paper, 2010.

Conclusion

1. According to the Penn World Tables, China's GDP per capita was the lowest in the world in each year between 1952 and 1957; Cormac Ó Gráda, "Great Leap into Famine: A Review Essay," *Population and Development Review* 37, no. 1 (2011): 192.

2. Jasper Becker, *Hungry Ghosts: China's Secret Famine* (London: Murray, 1996); Ralph Thaxton, *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China: Mao's Great Leap Forward Famine and the Origins of Righteous Resistance in Da Fo Village* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 327–331; Gao Wangling, "A Study of Chinese Peasant 'Counter-Action,'" in *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China's Great Leap Forward and Famine*, ed. Kimberley Manning and Felix Wemheuer (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011).

3. Cormac Ó Gráda, *Famine: A Short History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009), 116.

4. "Zhongyang zhengfu neiwubu guanyu shengchan jiucai de bocong zhishi" [Additional Instruction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Central Government Regarding Production and Disaster Relief], in *Zhonghua renmin gongheguo jingji dang'an ziliao xuanbian 1949–1952, nongye juan* [The Economic Archive of the People's Republic of China 1949–1952, Agriculture], ed. Zhongguo shehui kexue yuan (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 1993), 60.

5. He Ling and Xin Yi, "Zhengce pianxiang yu 1959–1961 nian nongcun jihuang" [Political Tendencies and the Rural Famine of 1959–1961], in *Dayuejin–Dajihuang*, ed. Song Yongyi and Ding Shu (Xianggang: Tianyuan shucheng, 2009), 1:502–503.

6. "Jueding wo guo liangshi wenti de fangzhen" [Deciding the Directions to Solve the Grain Problem of Our Country], *RMRB*, July 22, 1955.

7. Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, ed., *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao* [Historical Materials on Grain Work in Contemporary China] (Baoding: Hebei sheng gongxiaoshe Baoding yinshuachang yinshua, 1989), 1:300.

8. Barbara Falk, *Sowjetische Städte in der Hungersnot 1932/33: Staatliche Ernährungspolitik und städtisches Alltagsleben* [Soviet Cities during the Famine of 1932/33: Food Politics of the State and Urban Daily Life] (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2005), 26.

9. In the labor camps, the death rates were higher than elsewhere. It is estimated that the annual death rate in the Chinese camps *(laogai)* between 1959 and 1962 was around 10 percent of camp population, and as many as 6 million prisoners

may have lost their lives; Klaus Mühlhahn, *Criminal Justice in China: A History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 270. In the Soviet Union, prisoners of the Gulag, prison colonies, and exiled "kulaks" were also more likely to starve to death than people outside. Oleg V. Chlevnjuk, *The History of the Gulag: From Collectivization to the Great Terror* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 82.

10. Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 7.

11. Peter Nolan, "The Causation and Prevention of Famines: A Critique of A. K. Sen," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 21, no. 1 (1993): 11.

12. R. W. Davies and Stephen G. Wheatcroft, *The Years of Hunger: Soviet Agriculture, 1931–1933* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 406; Luo Pinghan, *Da qian xi*: *1961–1963 nian de chengzhen renkou jing jian* [The Great Migration: The Reduction of the Population of Cities and Towns in 1961–1963] (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2003), 88–89.

13. Peter Kropotkin, *Die Eroberung des Brotes und andere Schriften* [The Conquest of Bread and Other Writings] (Munich: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1973), 122–126.

14. Robert Conquest, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 329.

15. Donald Filtzer, "Die Auswirkungen der sowjetischen Hungersnot im Jahr 1947 auf die Industriearbeiter" [The Impact of the 1947 Soviet Famine on Industrial Workers], in *Hunger, Ernährung und Rationierungssysteme unter dem Staatssozialismus*, ed. Matthias Middell and Felix Wemheuer (Frankfurt [M]: Peter Lang, 2011), 85.

16. As Davies argues: "The crisis also imposed on the authorities an anguished search—in both principle and practice—for a more flexible economic system. In the system which had emerged by the end of 1933, market and quasi-market elements, and economic incentives, played a definite though subordinate role; this system continued without fundamental change until 1985." R. W. Davies, *Crisis and Progress in the Soviet Economy, 1931–1933 (The Industrialization of Soviet Russia 4)* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 456.

17. Chen Yun in Shangyebu dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo bianjibu, *Dangdai Zhongguo liangshi gongzuo shiliao*, 1:315.

18. Shang Changfeng, "Sannian jingji kunnan shiqi de jinji jiuzai cuoshi" [The Measure of Emergency Famine Relief during the Period of the Three-Year Economic Difficulties] unpublished paper, 2010.

19. Gao Wangling, "A Study of Chinese Peasant 'Counter-Action,'" 276–277.

20. Esther Kingston-Mann, "Transforming Peasants in the Twentieth Century: Dilemmas of Russian, Soviet and Post-Soviet Development," in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 3: *The Twentieth Century*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 431.

21. In this context Document Number 1, issued by the Central Committee in 2004, is important. For details, see Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, "The Distance between State and Rural Society in the PRC: Reading Document No. 1," *Journal of Environmental Management*, no. 87 (2008): 216–225.

22. Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 214.

23. Zhores Medvedev, *Soviet Agriculture* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 214.

24. Ronald G. Suny, "The Russian Empire," in *After Empire: Multiethnic Societies and Nation-Building*, ed. Karen Barkey and Mark von Hagen (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 143.

25. Ibid., 146.

26. Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, "The Distance between State and Rural Society in the PRC," 219–212. See also Vivienne Shue, *The Reach of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Body Politic* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), 69–70.

27. *RMRB*, September 29, 1958.

28. Mark Tauger, *Agriculture in World History* (London: Routledge, 2011), 144.

29. Terry Martin, *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 303.

30. Li Jianglin, *1959 Lasa!* [1959 Lhasa] (Xianggang: Xin shiji chuban jichuanmei youxian gongsi, 2010), 77–79.

31. Anna Kaminsky, ed., *Erinnerungsorte an den Holodomor 1932/33 in der Ukraine* [Places of Memory of the Holodomor 1932/33 in Ukraine] (Berlin: Bundesstiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED-Dikatur, 2008), 3.

Index

Adorno, Theodor, 5
"affirmative action," 255
Africa, 4, 14, 72, 150, 209
Agamben, Giorgio, 3
agricultural production (in general), 224, 226, 240, 242
aiguoliang (patriotic grain tax), 91, 186, 203
Alexander, Jeffrey C., 217
Amdo, 168, 183, 186, 196, 197, 198, 200, 205, 217, 255
Anderson, Benedict, 196
Anhui Province, 96, 101, 142, 143
anti-famine contract, 16, 221–222, 252
Anti-Rightist Campaign, 99, 101, 103, 104, 105, 114
anti-Semitism, 218
Antonov, A. S., 38
Australia, 145

Bachman, David, 273n60
Bailiang, 181
Baltic Germans, 159
baochan daohu (household responsibility system), 143, 252
Bayi Zazhi, 100, 108
Becker, Jasper, 205, 241
Beijing, 54, 63, 107, 121, 123, 124, 127, 136–137, 145, 148, 190, 201, 202, 231, 234, 244, 245
Bengal, 4, 72, 149, 179
Bergen-Belsen, 207
Bernstein, Thomas, 18, 34, 36, 55
birth planning, 33, 222, 225, 228–230, 236, 239, 251
birth rates, 2, 185, 196, 225
black markets, 7, 47, 79, 141, 151
Blair, Tony, 195
blockade of Leningrad, 9
Bo Yibo, 143
Bolshevism, 25, 37, 247
borders, 66, 159, 162, 163, 170, 210, 211, 214, 216, 256
Brezhnev, Leonid, 226–227, 238, 239, 250
British Empire, 2–3, 6, 72, 149–150, 192–193, 194
Buddhism, 187
Bukharin, Nikolai, 37, 41, 50, 248
Burma, 187

Calcutta, 72
calorie intake, 5, 6, 52, 53, 64, 152, 236, 240, 244
Canada, 145, 213, 214, 256

cannibalism, 194, 203
Cao Naiqi, 101
Cao Shuji, 130
Caucasus, 7, 58, 207, 209, 211
Central Asia, 159, 225, 226
Central Committee (of CCP), 15, 19, 43, 50, 91, 98, 99, 109, 116, 118, 122, 123, 124, 125, 128, 129, 130, 133, 137, 138, 146, 148, 171, 182, 183, 228, 235
Central Party Archives, 18–19, 57, 146
chang, 201
Cheek, Timothy, 66
Chen Boda, 35
Chen Dabin, 235
Chen Guodong, 98
Chen Yixin, 78, 284n40
Chen Yun, 6, 18, 52, 97, 110, 140, 142, 144, 146–147, 244, 250
Cheng, Tiejun, 66
Chernobyl, 213
chi qing. See "eat green"
Christians, 135
Civil Wars, 2, 6, 7, 30, 33, 38, 44, 67, 68, 70, 73, 85, 150, 166, 228, 258
Collectivization of agriculture, 8, 9, 36–39, 41–42, 44–45, 46–48, 57, 59, 69, 78, 96, 99, 101, 108, 109, 152, 166, 167, 170, 206, 223, 241, 247, 248–249, 253, 254, 255
communism. *See* transformation to communism
Confucian values, 30, 55, 238
Conquest, Robert, 59, 207, 208, 298n48
constitution, 162, 163, 234, 253
cooperatives, 39, 99, 100, 109, 171
counter-actions (*fan xingwei*), 20, 78
counter-narrative, 16, 158, 174, 177, 196, 256
Cultural Revolution, 13, 28, 34, 35, 81, 145, 176, 177, 183, 204, 223, 228, 230, 233, 234, 235, 239, 251, 254, 303n50, 309n10, 311n34
Curzon, George Nathaniel, 193
Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR), 46

Dalai Lama (Fourteenth), 164, 171, 177, 186, 187, 189, 192, 196, 198, 199, 201, 205, 218, 255, 256, 257
Dalai Lama (Thirteenth), 218
Dando, William, 2
Davies, R. W., 44, 49, 51, 57, 58, 59, 82, 210, 211, 315n16
Davis, Mike, 27, 193
Dawa Norbu, 201, 203, 205
De Waal, Alexander, 4, 14, 221, 239
death rates/death toll, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 20, 58, 64, 72, 112, 123, 127, 167, 186, 198, 211, 216n3, 263n37, 264n45, 266n70, 314n9
decolonization, 160
defense budget, 69, 127
dekulakization, 66–67
democracy, 21, 222, 237–239, 252, 295n128
"democratic reforms" in Tibet, 164, 168, 170, 172, 176, 182, 183, 184, 185, 187, 188–189, 203, 204
Deng Tuo, 27, 103
Deng Xiaoping, 141, 149, 182, 222, 236, 256
de-urbanization, 15–16, 68, 73, 116, 145–146, 149, 230–231, 232, 251
Dharamsala, 196
Dhondub Choedon, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205
diaspora, 4, 16, 158, 192, 195, 206, 214, 216, 256
Dietsch, Johan, 215
Dikötter, Frank, 18, 28, 55–56, 79, 80, 126, 266n70
disaster victims, 87, 113, 181, 243
disease, 2, 4, 9, 14, 29, 33, 49, 86, 117, 129, 134, 193, 216, 241
Dong Biwu, 84, 85
Drèze, Jean, 4, 150, 237–238, 252
drought. *See* natural disaster
Du Runsheng, 82
dual society, 26, 43, 60, 106, 110, 239, 242

"eat green" (*chi qing*), 47, 78, 81, 93, 129, 149
Edgerton-Tarpley, Kathryn, 30
"educated youth," 81, 231–232, 251
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 70
Ellman, Michael, 57, 82
empire (in general), 159, 162, 296n7
entitlement approach, 21, 67, 149–152, 238, 244, 246, 294n119
epidemics, 14, 27, 241
ethnic classification, 163, 297n36
exile. *See* diaspora

exports, 9, 10–11, 12, 20, 26, 31–32, 50–54, 55, 59, 60–61, 73, 84, 89, 104–105, 122–123, 124, 126, 142, 182, 234, 245, 247, 277n123
Eyerman, Ron, 217

famine (other than Soviet Union in 1931–33 and China in 1958–1961): Bengal in 1943, 4, 72–73, 149–150, 294n119; in general, 2–7; Henan in 1943, 27, 33; India, 3–4, 31, 150, 192–193, 237–238; Ireland (1846–1850), 193–195, 205, 264n47; Republican China, 2, 28; Russia in 1891, 5, 14, 29, 30–31, 32–33, 58, 240; Russia in 1921, 7–8, 14, 32–33, 36, 47–48, 67, 74, 247, 253; Soviet Union in 1947, 10–11, 13, 32–33, 36; World War II, 9–10, 32
February Revolution, 31, 240
Filtzer, Donald, 11, 249
Finns, 159
Fitzpatrick, Sheila, 35, 48, 49, 78
flood. *See* natural disaster
French Revolution, 46, 159, 248, 253

Gao Hua, 134
Gao Wangling, 20, 78, 241
Garnaut, Anthony, 56–57
genocide, 3, 8–9, 57–58, 71, 165–166, 187, 192, 198, 207–211, 213, 214, 256–257
German Democratic Republic (GDR), 46
Germany. *See* Nazi Germany
Goldmund-Lhasa railway, 176
Goldstein, Melvyn, 164, 171, 177
Gorbachev, Mikhail, 250
grain: boycott, 180, 210; consumption, 133, 136–137, 236; crisis, 10, 42, 180, 248; prices, 8, 42, 43, 48, 50–51, 61, 91, 104–105, 109, 114, 143–144, 199, 224, 227; procurement: 44, 45, 67, 123, 199, 210, 211, 227, 229, 242, 249, 255; production, 28–29, 44, 45, 90, 128, 134, 152, 170, 172, 203, 224, 225, 229, 246, 302n35; raw grain, 89, 90, 98, 129, 136; sale in cities, 94, 125–126, 145, 147, 232–233; surplus, 7, 9, 20–21, 42, 44–45, 87, 89, 90, 91, 113, 146, 167, 180, 203, 224, 233–234, 236, 242, 244, 258, 285n47, 289n18; transfers, 15, 88, 121, 123–125, 132, 137, 172, 184, 233–234
granaries, 47, 72, 89, 91, 115, 124, 126, 127, 134, 179, 181, 184, 207, 233, 234, 244
Gray, Peter, 195
Graziosi, Andrea, 165, 166, 209, 298n48
Grunfeld, Tom, 177
Guangxi Province, 102, 103
guerrilla, 34, 35, 38, 73, 171, 179, 184, 198
Guizhou Province, 116, 124, 234
Guomindang (GMD), 28, 30, 31, 51, 68, 85, 103, 173

Han Chinese, 157, 161, 162, 163, 165, 166, 170, 175, 178, 181, 187, 190, 198, 205, 217, 218, 256
Harvard University, 206
Hebei Province, 94, 99, 100, 108, 131, 132, 135
Heilmann, Sebastian, 34
Heilongjiang Province, 123, 124
Henan Province, 17, 27, 33, 56, 81, 96, 99, 119, 120, 125, 129, 131, 135, 143, 183, 222, 235
historiography, 16, 21, 175, 176, 189, 197, 207, 208, 212, 213, 215, 223, 234–235, 256, 300n1
Hitler, Adolf, 69
Holocaust, 191, 193, 198, 206–207, 214, 215, 216, 217, 257
Holodomor, 4, 206–207, 209, 212–215, 256
household registration system. See *hukou*
household responsibility system. See *baochan daohu*
Hua Guofeng, 309n10
Hubei Province, 85, 105, 106, 117, 124
Huimendao, 135
hukou (household registration system), 43, 65–66, 80, 89, 94, 121–122, 130, 138, 139, 147, 184, 185, 230–231, 250–251, 252, 254
Hundred Flower Campaign, 104
hunger (in general), 2, 3–7
hunger plan, 9, 71

identity, 159, 160, 162, 163, 165, 191, 195, 196–197, 212, 213, 215, 217–218, 256–257
imperial army, 160, 240, 253
imperial Russia, 6, 26, 28–29, 31, 71, 161, 240

imperial turn, 158–159
imports, 15, 20, 28, 50–51, 52, 84, 116, 126, 137, 142–146, 148, 178–179, 182–184, 227, 234, 251, 253, 257
India, 3, 4, 5, 10, 14, 31, 150, 171, 179, 182, 192–193, 194, 199, 203, 237, 238, 252
indigenization, 16, 158, 160, 161, 163, 167, 170–171, 173, 191, 255
Indonesia, 238
industrialization, 7, 14, 34, 40–41, 43, 49, 51, 59, 60, 61, 68, 73, 89, 108, 228, 247, 249, 252
inflation, 181
Institute of National Minorities, 201, 202
intellectuals, 16, 26, 35, 39, 63, 94, 104, 110, 137, 162, 165, 166, 195, 212, 216, 217–218, 256
Ireland, 192–195, 205, 256
Irish Republican Army (IRA), 195
"iron rice bowl," 111, 231, 254

Japan, 27, 31, 33, 69, 87, 120, 162, 163, 164
Jiangsu Province, 96–97, 129
Jiangxi Province, 85, 124
Jiangxi Soviet Republic, 68, 70
Jilge, Wilfried, 213
Jonassohn, Kurt, 208

Kaganovich, Lazar, 66, 208, 210
Kahan, Arcadius, 29
Kappeler, Andreas, 18, 161, 213
Kazakhstan, 66, 160, 167, 170, 210, 213, 224, 255
Kham, 168, 183, 186, 196, 197, 198, 200, 217, 255
Kharkov, 48, 63, 65
Khrushchev, Nikita, 208, 224, 225–226, 238, 250, 251
Kiev, 9, 65, 214
Kiev Institute of Sociology, 213
kolkhozes, 38–39, 47, 60, 61, 211, 212, 249
Kornai, János, 36
Kosior, Stanislav, 167, 298n55
Kravchuk, Leonid M., 212
Kronstadt, 7, 247
Kropotkin, Pyotr Alexeyevich, 46, 61, 248
Kuban, 82, 209, 210, 216, 307n67
Kueh, Y. Y., 12
kulaks, 7, 8, 38, 40, 65, 82, 249, 283n19
Kul'čyc'kyj, Stanislav, 165, 264n45
Kuromiya, Hiroaki, 8, 18, 58, 59, 69, 211, 307n67

labor camps, 47, 64, 246, 314n9
labor shortage, 251
"land of famine," 28, 32, 33
land reform, 25, 34, 37, 39, 90, 97, 164, 176, 188, 190, 249, 253
Laos, 187
law, 37–38, 42, 47, 65, 162, 164, 209, 213, 257
Lee, James Z., 33
legitimacy, 31, 33, 70, 84, 108, 110, 112, 222, 238, 250, 258, 259
Lenin, I. W., 34, 37, 38, 40, 68, 283n19
Leningrad (St. Petersburg), 9, 53, 63, 65, 68, 71, 73, 173, 244, 245
Lhasa, 164, 168, 169, 171, 177, 178, 179, 180, 188, 196, 199, 204
Li Jianglin, 170
Li Jingquan, 125, 234
Li Xiannian, 18, 56, 85, 98, 121, 122, 123, 142, 144, 148, 244, 289n18
Liang Shuming, 92, 104, 106
Liaoning, 54, 63, 120, 121, 123, 124, 127, 134, 135, 145, 244, 245
Lieven, Dominic, 173
Liu Jianxun, 143
Liu Juan, 185
Liu Shaoqi, 84, 141, 149, 222, 237, 266n72
livestock, 29, 32, 90–91, 128, 144, 167, 170, 172, 206, 226, 250, 251, 255
living standards, 29, 108, 225, 226, 252
local cadres, 18, 47, 48, 50, 54, 66, 78, 79, 92, 97, 102, 106, 113, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 123, 130, 131, 135, 140–142, 151, 153, 211, 222, 223, 243, 250, 254
Lohr, Eric, 31
Long March, 177, 203, 257
Löwe, Heinz-Dietrich, 31
Luo Pinghan, 19, 90, 145, 148
Lushan Conference, 50, 55, 119, 122, 128, 147

Ma Rong, 185, 303n54
Mace, James, 206, 207, 208, 209

Machinery and Tractor Stations (MTS), 64, 245
malnutrition, 1, 2, 3, 4–5, 7, 10, 14, 29, 135, 235, 237
Malthus, Robert (Malthusianism), 3, 33, 150, 192, 246
manchan sifen ("concealing production and private distribution"), 26, 49, 79, 82, 100, 116, 117–118, 120, 250
Manchuria, 6, 7, 69, 117, 162, 281n33
Mao Zedong: agriculture, 223, 249; compared to Stalin, 247–248; critique of Soviet Union, 74; on democratic centralism, 237; on egalitarianism, 119; famine, 55; foreign politics, 142; grain procurement, 68, 73; on grain rations, 128; Great Leap Forward, 148; on Liang Shuming, 92; manipulation, 50; nationalities policies, 173; Panchen Lama, 305n33; peasants, 40, 42, 52, 107; on public dining, 111; readjustment, 115, 250; on rebellion in Qinghai, 171; on relief, 119; on scholarship, 37; on situation in the countryside, 96; Stalinism, 34; terror, 59; on Tibet, 164, 178, 179, 188
Marcus, David, 209
Martin, Terry, 161, 167
Marx, Karl, 40, 41
Marxism, 28, 30–31, 203, 238
Marxism-Leninism, 34, 72, 81, 105
mass murder, 26, 55, 58, 211, 216, 307n72, 311n34
master narrative, 16, 198, 205
Mazu, 70
meat, 29, 51, 52, 53, 63, 95, 104, 106, 122, 134, 136, 137, 139, 170, 203, 210, 224, 225, 227, 236, 250
Medvedev, Zhores, 225, 227, 253
mice, 175, 178, 203, 257
migration, 4, 15, 65–66, 73, 80, 85, 86, 104, 122, 151, 185–186, 198–199, 225, 226, 233, 252
militia, 254
milk, 134, 224, 250
minimum energy requirement, 5, 236
Ministry of Civil Affairs, 84, 85, 111
Ministry of Food, 121
Mitchel, John, 194
mixed economy, 73, 258–259, 315n16
Moldavia, 10, 48
Molotov, Vyacheslav, 208
monasteries, 164, 168, 169, 170, 171–172, 179, 183, 187, 188–189, 190, 199, 257, 303n54
Mongolians/Mongolia, 69, 123, 124, 158, 162, 163, 173, 234
monks and nuns, 170, 171, 176, 187–189, 190, 257, 303n54
monopoly of purchasing and sales, 4, 7, 19, 42, 43, 48, 49, 88, 91, 125, 182, 184, 226, 239, 254
Moon, David, 29
moral economy, 87
Moscow, 29, 53, 63, 65, 68, 71, 73, 158, 167, 173, 207, 244, 245
Mullaney, Thomas, 297n36

Naimark, Norman M., 208, 209
nation (in general), 159, 160, 163, 196, 209
national minority, 161
nationalism, 16, 71, 159, 162, 166, 167, 173, 191–192, 194, 195, 196, 206, 214, 217–218, 298n48
natural disaster, 2, 4, 7–8, 9, 10–11, 12, 14, 26–27, 29, 30, 48, 71, 84–85, 89, 91, 93, 97–98, 99, 103, 110, 112, 116, 118, 128, 129, 130–131, 133, 134, 135, 146–147, 152, 181, 183, 193, 235, 242, 243, 250, 258, 264n47, 266n72
Nazi Germany, 2, 10, 52, 70–71, 73, 79, 206, 218, 249, 294n119
Neibu Cankao, 19, 77, 82, 84, 99, 100, 103, 104, 105, 116, 141
neo-liberalism, 193
New Economic Policy (NEP), 7–8, 9, 34, 37, 42, 70, 83, 253, 258
Nimu Incident, 303n50
Nolan, Peter, 152, 295n128
nomads, 66, 166–167, 169, 170, 172, 182, 183, 186–187, 205, 264n45
Novocherkassk, 224–225
nuns. *See* monks and nuns
nutrition, 5, 6, 29, 51, 52, 64, 84, 93, 95, 101, 113, 118, 129, 136, 178, 185, 227, 235, 236, 239, 240

Ó Gráda, Cormac, 4, 13, 14, 56, 194, 294n119
October Revolution, 25, 31, 35, 158, 160
Oi, Jean, 20, 79, 285n47

"one-child policy." *See* birth planning
one-party dictatorship, 239, 252
Opium War, 30
Oral History, 17, 81, 207
Osokina, Elena, 64
over-consumption, 21, 132
overreporting, 49–50, 93–94, 116
ownership structure, 46–48, 61, 112, 142, 143, 151, 223, 249, 258

Panchen Lama (Tenth), 164, 188, 199, 200, 303n54, 305n33
Paris Commune, 46, 248
party members, 38–39
passport, 15, 62, 65–67, 73, 211, 227
patriotic grain tax. See *aiguoliang*
"peaceful liberation," 164, 177–178, 190, 257
peasants resistance, 9, 15, 20, 31–32, 38, 39, 42, 47, 48–50, 56, 65, 66, 67, 78–80, 81–82, 83–84, 99, 105, 107, 109, 113, 149, 166, 248, 249, 264n47
Peng Dehuai, 37, 50, 55, 119
People's Communes, 11–12, 15, 20, 21, 34, 45, 46, 60, 61, 87, 110–111, 116–117, 129, 142–144, 146, 149, 168, 170, 172, 184, 186, 200, 234, 249, 254, 292n87, 293n88, 309n10
People's Liberation Army (PLA), 70, 104, 164, 169, 174, 175, 199, 254, 296n8
periphery, 16, 158, 159, 162, 164, 168, 173, 247, 253, 256
Perry, Elizabeth, 34, 222
Piłsudski, Józef Klemens, 166
Poland, 11, 69, 159, 167
Politburo of CPSU, 40, 57, 58, 59, 64, 66, 82–83, 167–168, 211
population development, 158, 178, 184–185, 225, 228, 229, 230
Potala Palace, 181
potatoes, 10, 28, 90, 96, 136, 141, 193, 225, 227, 235, 238, 246, 250
poverty, 7, 14, 21, 29, 30, 61, 71, 149–151, 193, 200, 231, 236, 241, 258
Powers, John, 175
Preobrazhensky, Yevgeni, 40–41
Preparatory Committee for the Establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region, 184
primitive accumulation, 40–42, 242
Prisoner of War (POW), 3, 9
private plots, 9, 21, 40, 47, 71, 79, 116, 140, 141, 143, 148, 151, 203, 212, 223, 224, 226, 227, 232, 234, 249, 250, 295n130, 309n10
promises, 7, 84, 86, 87, 110, 114, 250, 252
prostitution, 194
public dining halls, 11–12, 21, 35, 40, 54, 107, 111–112, 116, 117, 118, 129, 131–132, 139, 140, 142, 148, 151, 246, 254, 269n101
punishment, 139, 141, 142, 151, 188, 192, 207, 210, 211
purges, 39, 171–172, 255, 258

Qianlong, 161
Qing dynasty, 27, 30, 33, 157, 161–162, 163, 164, 197, 252, 255
Qinghai Province, 123, 130, 168–172, 173, 183, 186, 197, 200, 205, 255

rationing, 4; cards, 10, 31, 43, 72, 73, 89, 113, 128, 129, 136, 182, 243, 246; China (in general), 87–88, 89–90, 116–117, 242–243; complaints, 135; cutting of rations, 129–130, 148, 235; hierarchies, 63–65, 72, 94–95, 113, 137, 151–152, 244–245, 258; migration, 151; participation, 246; rural society, 97–98; Soviet Union in general, 42, 43–44, 63, 242; Tibet, 181–182, 204, 303n50; urban society, 53–54, 63, 95, 113, 147, 230; World War II, 6, 31
readjustment, 19, 21, 116, 142–143, 153, 234–235, 247, 273n60
rebellion. *See* uprising
Red Army, 63–64, 68, 69, 70, 82, 104, 203
Red Guards, 228, 231, 305n33
Reden, Stanislav, 167, 298n55
relief, 3, 8, 15, 20–21, 22, 30–32, 52, 55, 58–59, 61, 69, 82–83, 84–87, 89, 91, 96–97, 101–102, 103, 111, 112–113, 121, 124, 127–128, 130, 131, 145, 150, 152, 181, 183, 193–194, 202, 222, 235–236, 238, 241–242, 243, 247, 263n40
Republican China, 2, 26–28, 92, 99–100, 103, 173
resistance. *See* peasants resistance

responsibility, 15–16, 27, 30, 31, 35, 67, 84–85, 101, 121, 131, 145, 149, 184, 223, 251, 264n47
rice, 6, 28, 95, 96, 97, 104, 117, 127, 128, 136, 179, 186, 187, 217, 246
"right to subsistence," 222
rightist opportunists, 50, 55, 73, 109, 119, 120
riots, 4, 64, 105, 224
Robbins, Richard, 30, 31
Robinson, Mary, 195
Rural Reconstruction Movement, 92
Russell, Sir John, 193

sabotage, 82, 105, 121, 201, 211, 243, 249, 255, 258
Schiller, Otto, 207
Scott, James C., 78, 79, 83
Selden, Mark, 66
self-determination, 160, 162–163, 165
self-reliance, 85, 122, 183, 234, 239
Sen, Amartya, 3–4, 21, 149, 237–238, 246, 252, 294n119
"sending down" of urban population. *See* de-urbanization
Serbyn, Roman, 210
serfs, 176, 188, 190, 202
Seven Thousand Cadres Conference, 143, 237
Shandong Province, 91, 99, 101, 102, 111, 116, 117, 124, 129, 131
Shanghai, 63, 68, 99, 121, 123, 124, 127, 145, 148, 231, 233, 234, 244, 245
Sholokhov, Mikhail, 82–83
Siberia, 7, 210, 224
Sichuan Province, 44, 85, 120, 123, 124, 125, 168, 171, 179, 183, 185, 188, 197, 203, 233–234
Sicular, Terry, 145
Skrypnyk, Mykola, 168
slavery, 194, 217
Slezkine, Yuri, 161
Smith, R. E. F., 29
Smith, Steve, 39
Snyder, Timothy, 209, 210, 211, 212, 306n65
Social Revolutionaries, 37
Socialist Education Campaign of 1957, 15, 39, 83, 97, 99–101, 102, 105–106, 108–109, 110, 112, 120, 249
soldiers, 27, 63, 70, 101, 106, 160, 166, 169, 177–181, 189, 203, 225, 245, 247, 253, 257
sources, 15, 17–21, 57, 77, 82–83, 181, 183, 187, 190, 199, 206, 208, 234–235, 257
Soviet model, 34–36
"speaking bitterness," 101, 188
spring shortage, 86–87, 135
sputnik fields, 110
Srebrenica, 208–209
St. Petersburg. *See* Leningrad
Stalin, Josef: agriculture, 223, 250; Civil War, 67; compared to Mao, 247–248; famine, 55, 57; on famine refugees, 66; foreign threat, 69; grain crisis of 1928, 8; on grain procurements, 67, 73; on grain reserves, 68; on imports, 50; on intellectuals, 35; law on theft, 47; on nation and national question, 160, 165, 173, 297n36, 298n48; Neo-NEP, 9; on peasants, 40, 41–40, 49, 52, 82; on Ukraine, 167, 207–208, 209; Word War II, 254, 281n42
Stalinism, 34–36, 60, 212
starvation. *See* hunger
statistics, 5, 6, 7, 12, 19, 44, 48–50, 53, 56, 61, 86, 89–90, 108, 125, 132, 136, 168–169, 170, 177, 183, 184–187, 197, 198, 223, 235, 243
strike, 47, 49, 134, 224
Strong, Anna Louise, 188
students, 53, 94, 104–105, 108, 135, 161, 181–182, 201, 202–203
subsidies, 89, 137, 189, 190, 226, 227, 232, 239
Sun, Warren, 21–22, 56–57, 109
Suny, Ronald, 160, 253

taboos, 15, 57, 66, 77, 103, 107–109, 114, 119, 187, 190, 206, 223
Taiping Rebellion, 30, 107, 162
Taiwan, 68, 70
Tauger, Mark, 8, 9, 44, 59, 80, 81, 210, 211–212, 264n47, 294n119
taxes, 41, 91, 96, 136, 145, 172, 182, 183, 186, 224, 228
Teiwes, Frederick, 21–22, 109
textbooks, 177, 215, 222–223
Thailand, 187

Thaxton, Ralph, 20, 78, 79, 81, 82, 120, 149, 151, 152, 153, 222, 223, 239, 241
Three-Fix Policy, 96–98, 114
Tianjin, 54, 63, 121, 123, 124, 127, 145, 148, 229, 231, 234, 244, 245
Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), 83, 172, 184, 186, 196–197, 257
Tibet Work Committee, 180, 182, 184
Tibetan government-in-exile, 175, 176, 192, 196–197, 198, 199, 202, 216, 217, 256
Tilly, Charles, 296n7
transformation to communism, 11–12, 16, 111, 140, 160, 223–224, 249, 250, 258–259, 273n60
trauma, 217, 256
Tsampa, 178, 187, 199, 201, 202, 204–205, 217, 301n13
Tsarist government. *See* imperial Russia
Tsering Dorje Gashi, 201, 202, 203, 205
Tubten Khetsun, 201, 204, 205

Uighur, 158, 163, 185
Ukrainian Soviet Republic, 158, 167, 168, 211, 216
Ulster, 194
Underreporting. See *manchan sifen*
United Nations, 2, 11, 207, 208, 209, 213, 251, 256
United States, 11, 27, 28, 68, 69, 73, 78, 161, 194, 195, 208, 214, 251
University of Alberta, 206
uprising, 7, 38, 69, 149, 164–165, 168–169, 171–172, 174, 182, 183, 185, 188, 189, 199–200, 218, 249, 255, 257, 302n45, 303n50
urbanization, 16–17, 26, 59, 64, 65, 72, 73, 93, 113, 147, 222, 225, 226, 230–231, 239, 242, 246, 247–248, 252, 281n42
urban-rural inequality, 72, 103, 105, 128, 137–138, 151
U.S. Congress, 206, 207, 213
U-Tsang, 196, 198, 200

Valin, Jacques, 216
vegetables, 29, 52, 93, 101, 122, 123, 134, 135, 136, 148, 170, 202, 204, 225, 227, 235, 236, 250
Velikanova, Olga, 281n33
Vernon, James, 19, 192
village commune, 25, 36, 38, 159, 253
Viola, Lynne, 78, 80, 81
violence, 18, 66, 120–121, 141, 142, 150, 210

Wang, Feng, 33
Wangye Phüntso, 180
Wanner, Catherine, 213
"war communism," 7, 34–35, 70, 253
waste, 12, 43, 54, 92–93, 94, 111–112, 113, 116–117, 123, 188, 201–202, 242, 247, 287n111
weather. *See* natural disaster
Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, Susanne, 20, 66, 159, 254, 296n8
welfare, 16–17, 60, 87–88, 110–111, 147, 222, 226, 239, 242, 248, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 259, 263n40
Wheatcroft, Stephen, 6, 11, 13, 18, 20, 21, 28–29, 32, 44, 49, 51, 57, 58, 59, 69, 82, 210, 211, 263n37, 264n45
work points, 87–88, 111
workers, 3, 5, 6, 10, 25–26, 31, 35, 38, 41, 43, 47, 53, 57, 63–64, 65, 68, 72, 81, 92, 93–94, 95, 97, 101, 104, 105, 106, 107–109, 110, 117–118, 122, 128–129, 131, 132, 134, 139, 167, 179, 181–182, 201, 225, 230–231, 233, 242, 244, 245, 247, 248, 249, 255, 259
World Food Conference, 209
World Food Program (WFP), 5
World Health Organization (WHO), 236
World War I, 8, 44, 160, 162, 195, 240, 253
World War II, 2, 3, 6, 32, 47, 71, 73, 150, 215, 255, 281n37
Wu Zhipu, 56, 111, 119, 120
wubaohu, 88
wulagpas, 202

Xia Mingfang, 27
Xin Yi, 294n113
Xinhai Revolution, 162
Xinhua News Agency, 19
Xinjiang, 69, 161, 162, 163, 173, 234
Xinyang Incident, 120, 125
Xunhua Incident, 168–169

Yan Hao, 186
Yan'an, 35, 138
Yang Dali, 53, 142
Yang Jisheng, 138
Yanukovych, Viktor, 213

Yudong Incident, 56
Yugoslavia, 10, 165, 166, 214
Yushchenko, Viktor, 213, 215, 216, 257

Zeng Xisheng, 143
zerentian (responsibility field), 142–143
Zhang Guohua, 180
Zhang Rong, 127
Zhao Ziyang, 118
Zhengzhou Conference, 118–119
zhiqing. *See* "educated youth"
Zhou Enlai, 18, 119, 123, 124, 125, 137–138, 148, 228, 229, 230, 233
Zhou Xun, 18, 56